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1. Sea life - Fiction

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The Old Town

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Installation

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FLOATING REMEMBRANCES,

BY THE

OLD SAILOR,

Matthew Harrison Fisher

But here are men who fought in gallant actions,
As gallantly as ever heroes fought,
But buried in the heap of such transactions
Their names are rarely found, nor often sought.
Byron.

LONDON:
WHITTAKER AND CO. SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.
NOTTINGHAM: DEARDEN.
1854.

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Mar 29 Nov 1913



FLOATING REMEMBRANCES.

CHAPTER I.

THERE'S many a cockney in the Metropolis whose knowledge of the geography of his country is solely derived from seeing the mail coaches start from the General Post Office, and then the extent of his information merely amounts to this, that most of them travel different roads. I have often stood of an evening and witnessed the assembling of the royal carriages with feelings that it is impossible to describe ;—there they were, the carriers of news, literature, commerce, business, joy, peace, pleasure, love, disaster, distress, misery, pain ; in short all that could sweeten or embitter the cup of human life,—and often bearing the announcements of death to the bereaved, and not unfrequently conveying the warrant of execution for the living. The clock strikes eight and away they go, each towards its destination, with its varied freight of happiness or wretchedness. But what is London when compared with Paris in this particular. In the former we read upon the Coach doors the names of places, which taking the Metropolis as the central point radiate from it to every part of the island, but they go no further ; whilst in Paris may be seen, “to Petersburg ”—“to Moscow ”—

at capital afloat, by a few remembrances of circumstances that have occurred to me in different parts of the world, not in correct succession as they took place, but just as they arise in my mind, sometimes like the bubble on the stream—at others, like the proud ship as she climbs the rolling billow.

THE DESERTER.

IN the year —, I belonged to a dashing frigate, whose Captain, though a rigid disciplinarian and unrelenting in punishment, was nevertheless generous in the extreme, and allowed his people more liberty on shore than any other commander in the service. A breach of decorum, and especially desertion, he looked upon and felt more keenly as a personal insult to himself, than as derogatory to the regulations imposed by the rigid and death-dealing Articles of War. The officers of a ship generally shape their conduct by that of the Captain, and there were but few on board who were not connected with some aristocratic family of distinction.

Amongst the seamen was a remarkably handsome young man, who did his duty in the main top, and was universally esteemed for his cheerful readiness on all occasions, either when his services were required aloft, or when any scheme was proposed to promote exercise and amusement below. He pulled the stroke oar in the barge, and in several boat affairs had manifested a courage and a daring that had rendered him formidable to the enemy and valuable to his friends. When on shore he was particularly trust-worthy, and those who well knew him, would as soon have expected one of the timber-heads of the ship to have gone ashore upon the sheet anchor, as Jem Collins to entertain an idea of deserting. Yet one day the barge returned from the Sallyport at

favourable to your case, Collins?" asked I, "have you had any one to advise with?"

"Not a soul, sir!" answered he firmly, "yet the fault, if it is any fault, rests with myself, I have clinched the matter in my own mind, Mr. —, not to do a single thing till Captain—— comes in, and yet, sir, I should like to overhaul a few strands of past times, when you can speak to my never flinching from my duty, but——" and he looked round at the sentry, who had purposely removed to a short distance.

"I am sorry I dare not allow of further conversation, sir," said the marine respectfully, "I have already exceeded my orders, sir, but as you are, I understand, an officer of the frigate, I thought there could be no great harm done in letting you speak to the prisoner, but you must, if you please, discontinue it and leave him."

"If such are the orders you have received, sentry, of course I have only to obey them," responded I, "you are right in executing your duty."

"I thought it wd be so," uttered Collins mournfully, and then rallying again, continued with greater firmness, "yet why should I complain, or feel it a hardship? I deserted from the —— frigate, yet I never intended to remain away, it was to avenge my own wrongs,—I have done so, and must die for it:" he paused a moment, and then resuming in a more plaintive tone, he added, "still it is almost too severe, seeing as my fate is certain, that I must n't have a few minute conversation with one of my officers."

"Do not trouble your mind upon that score, Collins," said I soothingly, "I will see Captain P——, (the commander of the *Gladiator*) and endeavour to obtain permission to talk to you, though I fear it will

almost useless.—However I will try what can be done, and when I speak of your former good conduct, perhaps I may succeed.”

A loud hysterical laugh issued from the prisoner when reference was made to his previous fair character, and bidding him “good bye,” I ascended to the deck. The commander of the *Gladiator* was ashore, but the first lieutenant addressed me on the subject, and I spoke of poor Collins such as he had been in the frigate, in terms that rose spontaneous to my lips, probably prompted by the scene I had so recently witnessed in the cockpit. The lieutenant paid great attention to what I said, for though his nature was roughened and rendered harsh by the many badly disposed spirits he had to encounter in a guard-ship, yet he was by no means deficient in humanity when proper objects laid claim to the generous emotions of his heart. How I presumed to be so familiar with a superior, in endeavouring to interest him in poor Collins’s behalf I could never account for, especially as I cherished the utmost detestation of his crime, and was totally unacquainted with the remotest cause that could have tempted him to desert. The lieutenant made no promises, indeed he scarcely replied to my earnest request, except by promptly rejecting it, of holding any communication with the unhappy man ; but I gathered from his manners fair ground for hope that the unfortunate fellow would not be wholly abandoned. I returned to my prize vessel and mentioned the circumstance of Collins being a prisoner, as well as that I had seen him, to my crew, and honest and heart-felt was the commiseration of the worthy tars, who loved him with an attachment that none can divine, except those that have hung upon a topsail yard in the same

gale, or have fought in action at the same gun. Two of them had been his messmates from the period of his being pressed, when second mate of a homeward bound West Indiaman, and it was a bond of brotherhood not easily to be broken.

I was walking the vessel's deck, revolving in my ideas many schemes to benefit the poor fellow, and then on contemplating the penalty awarded to deserters, with the uncompromising discipline of Captain ———, as quickly abandoning them, when one of the men stopped before me, and touching his hat, whilst every muscle of his face betrayed agitation, requested permission "to go and see ———," he could not get the name out, he was almost choking.

"No one is allowed to speak to him," returned I promptly, guessing at his meaning, "the sentry has orders to prevent all conversation."

"What, with an ould messmate, yo'r honor?" uttered the man with evident surprise, and no small mingling of sudden indignation.

"With every one," returned I rather warmly, as recollections of poor Jem's worth crossed my remembrance, "even my interview was a stolen one, and I fear the sentry will be overhauled for conniving at it."

"Well, I'm bless'd, yo'r honor, but them are hard lines anyhow," responded the man angrily, "I've sarved my king and my country ever since I was a little taunter than the cooming of a hatchway—I have always done my dooty like a man in fair weather and in foul, and now—I dont care if ould Sir Isaac hisself haard me say it, as will say it afore any on'em—d—— my tarry trousers if ever I sarves em another hour if Jem doesn't get fair play—all square and above board—that's all."

"You know, Wills, I ought not to listen to such language without reporting it, said I, in a tone of remonstrance, "I respect your feelings, but you must not talk thus to me."

"In good right not, yo'r honor, and I know I'm an ould fool for doing it," answered the veteran, "but I'd say as much to the Lord High Admiral, and if they calls it mutinous, all well and good, Muster—all well and good. Poor Jem's fate's seal'd, that's sartin, and if my overhauling a bit of my mind to 'em setting in case as they wont do things all ship-shape in the regards o' justice, why they may just tar me with the same brush, and there'll be an end of both on us."

"Well, Wills, restrain yourself, my man," I urged upon him. "Your earnest desire to see Collins will allow of my making an official application to Captain P ———, man the boat, I'll go directly."

Never was promptitude more powerfully exhibited, the boat was instantly ready, and before two minutes were expired the oars were in the water, and the men sturdily bending to them with hearty good will. Wills, a veteran quarter master, was my second in command, and he accompanied me, the rest of the crew stood watching our progress, till we got in amongst the hulks in ordinary, and soon afterwards I landed at the dock-yard stairs, where I saw Captain P ——— standing surrounded by officers. After waiting some time, an opportunity offered for addressing him, and raising my hat with the usual salute, I requested a few minutes' hearing.

"I am particularly engaged just now, young gentleman," said he, "is it on duty you wish to speak to me?"

"It is, sir," responded I respectfully. "I am one of

taking him by the lapel of his coat he drew him so closely towards him that their noses nearly touched, "ship's rum or shore rum, sir—bad habit—very bad habit—you was groggy last night—palsied hand, sir—hot coppers, sir—mackarel's eye, sir—muddled brain, sir! You turned in groggy, and have hardly got over it now."

The warrant gazed ruefully at the Admiral—heaved up what he meant for a deep sigh from his heart, but it was more like a grunt issuing from the recesses of the manger,* "Why I owns, Sir Isaac, I was a little bit slued in my *momentum*."

"Your what sir—what the devil place was that you got drunk in?" demanded the Admiral, "an old man like you should not frequent such haunts of infamy."

"Aunts, Sir Isaac," returned the other inquiringly, "why I dont 'keep such things in store, axing yo'r honor's pardon, though I might find an *uncle* or two upon a pinch; and as for turning in groggy, I beg leave in all due regard for yo'r honor to deny it in the most disrespectful and indeckerus terms."

"D— these warrants—they'll do nothing but study Chesterfield before long," uttered the Admiral, "the moment they ship their long togs, they make an attack upon the dictionary and cut up every word into baby rags. Perhaps you will say, sir, you was not intoxicated last night?"

"With all proper indifference, yo'r honor," responded the warrant, "I don't mean to deny I was tosticated—but I was ashore on leave."

"What do you mean then, sir, by your endeavours to deceive me in saying you didn't turn in groggy?" demanded the Admiral.

* A place in the fore part of a ship where the pigs are kept.

"'Cause I never turned in at all, sir," responded the other, with a look of comical expression.

"Go sir—go—bear a hand with your duty, and get on board," exclaimed Sir Isaac, releasing him, "give up drinking, particularly in a morning—bad habit, sir—very bad habit!" and then turning to me, he went on, "what sort of character did Collins bear in the ship?"

"A most excellent one, sir," replied I emphatically, "Captain —— was accustomed to offer him as an example of a good seaman."

"Ah! I don't like your pattern men," returned the Admiral contemptuously, "they are generally hollow at heart."

"But not Jem Collins, yo'r honor," uttered old Wills persuasively, "there's not never nothing hollow about him."

"How came he to run then, old man?" demanded Sir Isaac, with some degree of sternness.

"That's what I should like to know, yo'r honor," returned the veteran, "for its someut of a mixstery to me."

"It has been a mystery to every one, sir," said I, in corroboration of the quarter master's statement, "he was the most cheerful and contented man aboard."

"Apparently, perhaps," remarked the Admiral doubtfully. "He was pressed from a West Indiaman, I believe."

"Yes, yo'r honor—he was second mate of a barque," answered Wills, "and I've haarde that, when he was a boy, his father was well to do in the world—but, both father and mother are under ground now," and the veteran actually sighed.

"Was he partial to the merchant service—do you think he liked it better than a man-of-war?" asked Sir Isaac.

"No, yo'r honor—for he often used to say, that he'd rather sarve his king than any one else, purwided there was counly opportunity to get someut like a lift in the way of purmotion," answered Wills.

"Now old man," said Sir Isaac with emphasis, "you were his messmate, and ought to know a little about him—I own I have been much puzzled relative to Collins; he has refused communicating the cause of his running to every one that has endeavoured to obtain the fact from him; he seems fully sensible of the fate which awaits him upon that score; he is equally silent and reserved upon the subject of his attack on Mr. Mason, though that alone must prove fatal to him. Pray, old man, did you ever hear him mention the name of Mason?"

"Never, yo'r honor, Jem warnt at all given to gabble about his consarns," answered Wills, "he kept all them there things to hisself, and if any body got to paying out a bit o' slack regarding his edecation, it used to pipe the blood into his face, and he looked as moloncholy as a dying dolphin."

"Was there any sweetheart, any young devil in petticoats in the way?" asked the Admiral, fixing his eyes keenly on the veteran's face.

"Not as I knows on, yo'r honor," replied Wills, "but he alays gave the skylarks a wide berth, and never had a girl aboard."

The Admiral walked apart with Captain P ——— for a minute or two, and on his return, addressing Wills, he said, "Now, old man, you shall see and talk, without restraint, to your messmate, if you will promise to communicate to me, or Captain P ———, what passes between you."

A flush, a crimson flush spread over the bronzed cheeks of the veteran, and no sooner had Sir Isaac ceased than, anger rising above discretion, he uttered, "If I do then may I be ——;" the oath did not escape, and becoming instantly sensible of his fault in using such language, he crushed his hat in a heap, and gazing intently in the Admiral's face, he mournfully said, "Sir Isaac, yo'r honor has known me through a long life, and I humbly axes you whether I ever did any thing that I need be ashamed on;" he shook his head, so as to scatter the white locks over his brows, "God bless yo'r honor, you never could mean it."

I marked the expression of Sir Isaac's countenance well—at first a frown contracted his features, and this was succeeded by a working of the muscles, that evidently betrayed wrath stirring in the breast; but as the veteran concluded, the whole had passed away as a cloud and the Admiral's face was calm, "You are right Wills," said he, "you shall see the prisoner, and I will leave the rest in your own hands."

"I know'd yo'r honor never meant it," uttered the veteran, with unaffected gratification, whilst a smile played upon his time-and-weather beaten cheeks, "Poor Jern, it will be some comfort to *him* too, when I tell of yo'r honor's kindness."

This was spoken with so much sincerity of feeling, that both Sir Isaac and Captain P —— turned away as I thought to conceal their emotion, for oh, there is nothing like the voice of nature, when pleading in the accents of commiseration, to make a deep and powerful impression on the human heart. As for myself, it thrilled through every pulse, I felt a rising in my throat that almost choked me, and it brought the water into my

eyes ; there was so much of genuine simplicity and upright integrity in the old man's tone and manner, that it raised him higher in my estimation, and I could have loved him as a father.

"Young gentleman," said Sir Isaac, "Captain P—— will give you an order to visit the prisoner ; for yourself I hardly need tell you, that an association with the men does not become an officer, and therefore it would be judicious in you not to remain whilst Wills is conversing with his messmate. At the same time," continued he, turning to Captain P ——, "I must own that man has greatly interested me, and if this young gentleman can by any means obtain knowledge of facts which might justify an extension of favour, I can see no especial harm in it, eh."

Captain P —— waited for a minute to ascertain whether the Admiral had any thing more to say, but perceiving that the observation had been made somewhat inquiringly, he replied, "None whatever, sir, the poor fellow is not at all communicative, and perhaps something may be elicited, advantageous to him, he needs advice under his present condition, and perhaps old Wills—indeed I feel certain he will be an honest and prudent counsellor."

"Well then it shall be so," said the Admiral, "let them have a written order to see the prisoner at four bells* to-morrow forenoon, then, old man, act wisely and prudently."

"I wool, yo'r honor, indeed I wool," returned the veteran, his face glowing with satisfaction, "I'll do all to the best of my 'bility."

* Ten o'clock in the Morning.

The order was obtained, and jumping into my boat, we returned to the prize. What little remained to do had been done during my absence, and the men congregated round old Wills, listening to his anecdotes of Jem Collins, as well as of former services with Sir Isaac Coffin, and many were the anxious glances at the Gladiator, as if they longed to pierce the vessel's side, so that they might see their old friend and shipmate, to console him under the pressure of affliction.

Who Mr. Mason was, and what were the allusions made to him by the Admiral, I had but a faint idea, gathered from the first lieutenant of the guard-ship, who stated, that Mr. Mason was an officer of the navy, who had endeavoured to arrest Collins, but after a severe struggle, had been knocked down and almost killed by him, in fact he was then supposed to be confined to his bed in a very precarious state.

Precisely at four bells in the forenoon watch was I on the quarter-deck of the guard-ship, and presented my credentials to the first lieutenant. It was a lovely morning, redolent of summer beauty, the sun threw its genial warmth upon the smiling face of nature, and though the scenery was not of a rural kind, yet the lawn and garden in front of Haslar Hospital, and the distant fields and meadows, exhibited a charming freshness to one who had been long absent from such enjoyments. All was bustle in the harbour, the golden rays tinged the summit of many a little purple wave, and boats with their colours flying, and their white sails glistening, skimmed through the yielding waters, bearing happy hearts and merry faces, whilst officers in their handsome uniforms occupied the stern sheets, and gave no mean feature to the picture. There also were the stout bulwarks of

British glory with their bright and armed sides, quietly reposing on the surface of the stream, and waiting for opportunity to assert Britain's supremacy on the seas; it was a spectacle to fill the breast, with pleasing emotions of animated pride, and as I looked round, the love of country glowed within as warm and as pure as the gladdening beams that emanated from the radiant orb of day.

From this scene I descended to the place where poor Collins was confined in gloom. It was, however, lighter than the preceeding day, as all the hatches had been taken off, and the ports and scuttles opened. Old Wills followed close in my wake, and he stopped facing the prisoner, whom he gazed on for a minute or two without uttering a word. The veteran stood with his hands folded one in the other behind him—his head held down, and with a look half commiseration, half anger, at length he uttered the word "Jem." The poor fellow at first did not move—there was a deadly paleness on his cheeks, he scarce raised his eyes, and it was evident there was a strong struggle going on in his heart; ; but when he heard his name mournfully pronounced by one whom he had learned to respect, the prisoner started—he had been accustomed to the old man's cordial greeting and friendly approbation—he had often listened with gratified pride to the veteran's exclamation, "well behaved, my hearty!"—but now the tone of his voice was reproachful, though faltering, and Collins felt it the more on the latter account—he gave a convulsive sob, and then assuming a sternness of demeanour, as if determined to crush the feelings that threatened to unman him, he replied, "Yes, old messmate, I am here, hard and fast in the bilboes, but even you shall have no cause to be ashamed of me."

"I hope so, Jem—I hope so," responded the veteran, more assured, "but I'm thinking, messmate, you can't rub the grease off your heels, and that I'm told is logged down clearly against you."

"And its true enough too," admitted Collins, "I have never denied it—I never mean to deny it—but I did not intend to desert."

The old man shook his head. "How then came you to quit the ship, or rather leave the boat clandestiously?" inquired he.

"It's a long story, messmate," returned the prisoner, "and mayhap you haven't time to hear it now"—

"But I have though," responded Wills, "and here's Muster——has got the order.—Ah, I thought Sir Isaac, rum un as he is, would'nt go for to refuse an ould shipmate."

"I am very grateful, sir, for your remembrance of me." said Collins, turning to where I was standing, "the seeing you yesterday clapt a taut strain on my heart, for I had not heard a friendly hail for many a long day, and it's tedious work Mr. —— to sit here hour after hour in one universal gloom—with a vision of the fore yard, and running gantlines constantly afore the eyes. I know I must die, sir, and I would meet my doom as a man ought to do—but this here's killing of me a bit at a time. I don't fear death, messmate," to old Wills, "it arnt that! but there's them—" his voice faltered for an instant, but he regained his firmness by an effort, and added, "no matter, old boy—you shall never say that Jem disgraced you, though you may have to see him sewed up in his hammock afore his time."

I felt I was a restraint upon their free communication, and therefore, after assuring Collins of my earnest de-

to serve him, and exhorting him to place every confidence in the old quarter master, I bade him farewell, and ascended to the deck—the sun was still shining in all its brilliancy and light, but I could not chase from my mind the darkness I had just quitted—nature looked as lovely as ever, but her smile could not banish from my remembrance the scene I had so recently witnessed—there were still to be seen happy faces and gay apparel, but they could not supersede the vision of that care-worn woe-stricken countenance I had so lately seen—an unusual depression of spirit came over me, and I experienced a sickness of heart amidst the joyousness of life.

CHAPTER II.

WE left the veteran Dick Wills, in deep consultation with his unfortunate young shipmate Jem Collins, in the cockpit of the ship usually called the “old” Gladiator, but which in point of fact had never been to sea. She was one of the two decked forty-fours, and after she was launched, her construction was found to be so faulty, that she was not considered sea worthy. The only cruise she ever made was from Portsmouth harbor to Spithead, and it was a cause for rejoicing when they got her back again. From that time she was devoted to the service of the Port Admiral’s flag, and there she lay year after year, abreast of Haslar Hospital, notorious in character, and destitute of fame.

Poor Jem, with both legs in the Darbies,* sat on the

* Irons.

deck giving an occasional glance at his humble but, worthy friend, and though a smile now and then played upon his care-worn features, yet it was evident that the feeling which produced it, was only momentary,—it was like a gleam of sunshine breaking through a stormy sky—an effort of nature struggling against the breaking of the heart. Dick looked long and earnestly upon the young man; for though he detested the offence, yet he could not restrain those heaven-born impulses which are the sure characteristics of a noble and a generous mind. The sentry was not within hearing, he had, either through delicacy, or by the orders of his sergeant, removed to a distance, and the two were left unrestrainedly together.

“It’s a grievous and a cantankerous sight to these here ould eyes to see you thus, Jem,” said the quarter-master mournfully. “There’s ONE above knows how proud I was of you when I first larned you to knot and splice, and you took it so kindly. They may talk o’ yer long shore larning, Jem, when the schoolmaster overhauls the slack of his native tongue, and puts the gear together by book work; but what’s that to showing a lad how to use a marlin-spike,* or laying the strands of two ropes together, so as to make ’em into one. Many an hour, Jem, have I stood at the binnacle to larn you how to box the compass,† and it did my ould heart good when you took your first trick at the whether wheel,‡ and kept her course so steady that you might have shoved the eend

* An iron instrument used in splicing a rope. + To box the compass is to repeat the names of the whole of the 32 points, beginning at North and going round to North again. † The situation of the steersman when steering. In large ships there are always two men, one on the weather side of the wheel, an able seaman, and another to leeward, generally a landsman.

of her flying-jib-boom into a mosquito's eye," the old man's face glistened at the remembrance. "And then, Jem, when the skipper hailed you so confectionously that ere time arter the heavy squall in which you hauled out, the weather-earing of the main-to'sel, though all hands deserted from the yard, and he called you a brave lad, and sent for the clerk to rate you A.B.* on the muster book; it was a glorious day to me, Jem, every pulse in my body seemed piping to joy, for there was a somut within that made me feel all over I don't know how, and it forced the spray into my scuppers, and says I to myself, that ere's the boy as will set up the standing backstays of his ka-rackter by and by, and blow high or low will alays be found at his duty.' And so you was, Jem, in battle, and in breeze—whether it was the voice of the Almighty moving upon the waters, or the thunder of man's invention in rattling broadsides, it was a cordel to my soul to see how nobly you answered the signals of my hope: every word of praise from the skipper's lips was to me like a fair wiud to a heavy laden marchant-mun, and I thought to myself as I stood upon the weather quarter-deck gun at the con—I thought to myself, 'Dick, no fear of the colors being struck arter you're hove down for a full due if all our lads as is rising, keep their weather eye up like, Jem,' and messmate, though I don't often trouble the Almighty in regard of spinning a long yarn by way of a petition, seeing as he must have quite enough bother with them there sort of things from fellows as is never contented, but are alays wanting to shift their berths and get into smoother water; yet, Jem,

* A B, the distinguishing letters to show an able seaman, which entitles the man to increase of pay and more prize money.

I did pay out the best part of all I remembered of my catechiz, with a bit or two of a prayer I know d, by way of being grateful for present mercies and axing for future favors. But when I look at you now, messmate, hard and fast in the bilboes - jammed like Jackson and never a knife to cut the siezing; all that too, Jem, for—." The old man paused, overcome by his emotion, and taking a severe bite at his pig-tail so as to raise a huge hillock in his cheek, he quietly seated himself by the side of the unhappy captive.

With varied sensations according to the tenor of the veteran's discourse, did Collins listen to the well-meant, though distressing harangue—it renewed many a bright vision of the past, when honors and distinction were his own, but it only increased the bitterness of his anguish when he gazed at the shackles upon his legs, and thought upon that ignominious end which inevitably awaited him. "I have turned it all over in my own mind from clew to earing, messmate. I've slued my memory eend for eend, for I arnt been houlding on by the slack here day after day in loneliness and silence—like a wreck cut adrift from every hope, and not never a precious soul to care whether I foundered at my anchors—you see I'm moored rogue's fashion by the heel instead of the head—but I was a saying, here I have been many a long hour by day, and many a dreary watch by night without never a soul to care whether I sunk at my anchors, or was run down—" he shook his head—"run up, I mean, for that will be my fate, Dick, as sure as we are here lying alongside of each other.—I know it, messmate, for t'other night the purser's dip *

* A small candle about twenty to the pound served out by the purser.

in the jolly's * lantern parted in a midships, and the top hung all down a-cock-bill, and the tallow run and showed me the thing as clear and as plain as the table land at the Cape, when the devil has folded up his dinner cloth."

"Them are things that arn't by no manner o' means to be despised, Jem," said the quarter-master seriously, "Natur has her own way of working her traverses for the onlarned in book lore, and many a wise and prudent lesson may be gained from nothing more than a purser's dip if so be as there arn't never no other means handy. Howsomever, Jem, don't go for to abandon the craft 'cause the pumps may be choked—many a weather-beaten hull has rode out the gale, or watched for a lull and got safely into port, as expected to go down in deep water, or beat to pieces on the rocks. Not but what I'm thinking you have got right slap into the bight of a gallows bad job; and honor bright, I carn't help saying, that if you gets off from going to heaven in a sling, it ull be touch and go with you. But then touch and go is good pilotage, Jem—you may get your bottom scraped, and lose some of your sheathing, yet, messmate, there's docks enough to repair a damaged ka-rac-ter, and then you can keep full-and-by† for the rest o' your days; true to your king and country, and faithful to your colors. To be seized up by a few foxes‡ at the gangway, is not so bad as a piece of two inch jamming your windpipe."

A spasm of horror passed over the features of the

* Jolly is the nickname among sailors for a marine. + Full-and-by is sailing close to the wind without shaking the sails.

† A fox is made of four or five rope yarns twisted up together by the hand.

poor fellow at the mention of such contingencies, but it disappeared in a moment as he responded firmly, "No, messmate!—never! and its of no use to bowse another inch upon that fall. Every blow with the cat would cut deep into my heart, and draw out its best blood and best feelings—every mark that it left on my back would be a record of shame. No, Dick, I should never survive the disgrace. What! to live and be pointed at as a flogged deserter?—"

"Why, what the devil else are you but a deserter?" said old Wills, with no small degree of sternness, "I arnt never the man to speak o'things out o'their real proper names like a Frenchman, who calls a sail a viol,* and a ship a worser.† I tell you what it is, Jem—and, whether you live or die, log it down for a truth, that it's more honorable to have it said 'that ere man has regained by good behaviour what he lost by bad' than to haul down your colours and go out of the world sulky because there's a chance of some lubber or another throwing hot water and ashes to windward of you in regard of ould grievousness.—Mind, I dont pretend for to say for sartin that you wont get a cast o'the parson's office, and a taut squeege with the yard-rope; ‡ but I do say as you've no right to cut your own cables and drift ashore, as long as there's a probability of your houlding on. So now, up and tell us all about it, Jem, and rely upon it, messmate, you shant want a friendly second as long as ould Dick has got a shot in the locker. Why, man, its all plain sailing enough!—we must get one of the big-wigs to work the reckoning, and find the latitude and longitude of the thing, and when we have

* Viole. † Vaisseau. ‡ The rope by which men are executed at the fore-yard arm.

pricked off our place upon the chart of reason by the parallels of the law, so as to get the right bearings and distance of the port we want to fetch, why then, my boy, we can shape our course accordingly, and if the breeze is dead again us, we must haul close up and beat to windard hank for hank."

"God bless you, Dick, I know you means well, but I'm duberous that it'wo'nt do," uttered the prisoner, with a mournful shake of the head, "I don't and never did like them big-wigs—I hates a lawyer as I do the devil."

"Heave and pawl there, Jem," remonstrated the veteran, laying hold of Collins' arm, to give greater effect to his declaration—"A British seaman should n't never hate any body but the French—no, not even the devil, for I don't believe one half as they charges him with, and ther's no telling, bad and black as he is.—though for the matter of his colors the niggers paints him white—yet I'm saying bad and black as he is, there's never nothing but what you may get some good out on, and mayhap he may lend us a lift at a pinch, for notwithstanding what the clargy says as 'he goes cruising about seeking to devour a roaring lion,'—and that's no babby's bite any how in these here times, Jem,—yet unless you can prove he has done you or your country any harm, what right have you got to speak again him. And as for the lawyers, why the case is just as this here, Jem,—if you was overboard and couldn't swim, and a beggar of a shark was turning on his back to grab hould on you, with no chance of knowing whereabouts he'd fix his teeth—wouldn't you, I say, Jem, wouldn't you, if the thing was possible, give him one o' your legs to play with, rather than let him ram-

shackle your whole body ;—or suppose the bowman o' the cutter seeing you sinking, with the shark and be blow'd to him, opening his infarnal jaws—suppose the bowman was to catch his boat-hook in your ribs and save you from the double death, would you quarrel with the boat hook ? Well, my boy, just so it is in your dealings with lawyers, you must let 'em have a fleshy grip to try and save your life, and that's all about it. So now if you'll turn-to and rouse out the whole consarn, why here am I ready to coil it away. But if you'd rather wait till the statues-at-large comes aboard, and then let one overhauling do, why say so, messmate, and as mayhap the yarn wont be over-pleasant to spin, it had better be done upon that tack ! and in the meantime I'll go and ax the advice of them, as has alays behaved well to me let the weather be what it would."

"Act as you please, Dick," said the prisoner resignedly, "I know you will do all you can for me, and I'm certain that however much you may blame me for leaving the boat, you have no cause to be ashamed of poor Jem in other matters."

The veteran kept his word—the captain of the Gladiator directed him to a clever solicitor of Portsea, who visited the prisoner and heard a faithful narration of his tale, in which he became so deeply interested, that without holding out any hopes he promised to exert himself to the utmost.

A few days afterwards the frigate arrived, and Captain——in the first flush of indignation, forgot all Jem's good conduct, and felt a pleasure at the idea of witnessing the punishment which every one agreed it was impossible to avoid ; for just at that time the very foolish plan of large bounties, and finding substitutes, im-

duced the seamen to quit their ships, and enter for others for the purpose of obtaining a present supply of cash, which they expended in debauchery ; thus they became marked down as deserters, though still remaining in the service. Captain —— would not see the unfortunate fellow, but Sir Isaac Coffin had given orders that Dick Wills and the Solicitor should have free access, and though the former was extremely taciturn in all that related to the subject, yet he was as active as a youth, and went to work in a pleased business-like way, following the directions of the lawyer in every particular.

A court martial had been applied for and granted, and a very short interval elapsed before the day was fixed, and not a little anxiety prevailed amongst the shipmates of the prisoner as to the probable result. I was still in the prize, and on the day previous to the trial was returning from the Post Office to my boat at the Point, when near it I observed a number of women surrounding a young female dressed in mourning, and uttering fierce and disgusting language towards her, whilst she endeavoured by tears and entreaties to soothe and pacify them. To witness an assemblage of loose women near that spot was no novelty, nor was it any thing uncommon to hear them give utterance to the most obscene and horrible expressions, so that I should have passed on without heeding them, but there was something in the appearance and manners of the girl in black, that bore a striking contrast to the unfortunate creatures who were persecuting her, and it attracted my attention.

“What’s the matter here, Samson ?” inquired I of one of my people who was remaining by the boat.

“Its rum and jealousy, Sir,” replied the man, “two

of the worst things as can get hould of sich as them. One of the women saw the poor young thing overhauling a bit of confab with her fancy man as belongs to the Guardo's* small cutter, and as she'd bedevilled herself with the grog, so she hoisted the yellow flag, and calls some of her pals together, and they bore down in a squadron abreast to attack her."

"O! I know you're a favourite amongst the girls, Samson," said I, "pray do you know any thing of the unfortunate they are abusing?"

"Never seed her afore in my life, sir," answered Samson with a good humored smile, which, however, soon passed away, and he assumed a serious look, "I've been watching on 'em some time, sir," continued he, "and I'm blessed if I dont think she's a young innocent as is in danger from fire ships, and if she goes up Pint they'll tear her in pieces."

I saw the truth of the man's observation, and felt great repugnance at the idea of leaving the distressed girl to the *tender mercies* of such debased and demoralized creatures. "Do you think you could get her down to the boat Samson?" asked I, "we might land her again at the Hard as we pull up the harbour."

"Or take her aboard with us, sir," uttered the man, in a tone of inquiry, and a half smile on his cheek, "why, yes, sir, I dare say I can manage it if Watkins will jist lay athwart their hawse, and keep them from making head-way whilst I tows off the prize."

Watkins, the other seaman, assented, and Samson elbowing through the women who had worked themselves up to a pitch of demoniac fury, sung out, "clear the gangway—make a lane there," till he reached the centre

* The guard-ship.

of the group, when taking the young girl's arm within his own, he made a rush back again, and the poor frightened creature, who thought only of escaping from her tormentors, clung firmly to him. At first the women were silenced by the suddenness of the thing, but when they saw that they were likely to lose their victim, they made a simultaneous movement towards the boat, and notwithstanding the endeavours of Watkins to prevent it, they would soon have dragged her back again, but Samson, with nearly the strength of his earlier namesake, took her up in his arms like a child and placed her safely between the thwarts * then jumping in, I promptly followed him ; but Watkins had been grasped by two or three of the harpies, who tried to hold him fast—their strength, however, was not adequate to the task, and though they continued to hold on by him, he contrived to move forwards, dragging them after him, and shouting, "shove off, Sir,—bear a hand and shove off." Samson in an instant pushed the boat off from the beach so as to leave a fair space open ; but fearing that Watkins might sustain some injury from the women, I was about to order him to shove back again, when the man reached the water's edge, and one of the women quitted her old ; the other two would gladly have done the same, but Watkins, partly relieved from incumbrance, made a desperate effort, clutched his enemies, and plunging forward, they were all three the next minute nearly up to their necks in the cool element.

Roars of laughter, shouts and imprecations resounded from every quarter, people came thronging down—the man-of-war's men left their boats to view the spectacle

* Thwarts are the seats across a boat on which the men sit to row.

— the women on the shore were some rejoicing in the mischief, whilst others were throwing stones regardless whether they struck friend or foe— in short, it was a scene of confusion and noise, which even in a seaport town in war time was not always to be met with. As for the poor girl we had rescued—she sat on the thwart as pale as a corpse, and seemed ready to faint from terror, and both Samson and myself were too much engaged in trying to place the boat in a position to pick up Watkins, to offer any assistance that could calm the perturbation of her mind. But Watkins seemed in no haste to leave the ladies, for there he stood, with all the indifference and deliberation imaginable, between the two sea-nymphs, on whom the cold liquid evidently produced a beneficial effect, as far as silence went; nor could it well be otherwise, for Watkins—a strong sturdy fellow, with sinews like a giant—kept them at arm's length, and the moment either of them opened her lips, under she went, as Watkins declared “salt water bathing was the best cure in the world for a foul tongue.” At this moment, when hundreds had assembled, and the riot was increasing, four or five seamen brought down old scraping Davy, the fiddler at the Long-room, on their shoulders, and commanded him to strike up. Davy unhesitatingly obeyed, he started off with a reel, and Watkins, catching the humour, let go the ladies (who did not dare move for fear of being drowned) and threaded a three handed reel with them in the water. The shouting and laughter grew louder and louder as Davy played away, and in a few seconds Watkins was joined by one of the liberty men of the *Barfleur* 98 -- madness seemed to rule the moment, for in a short space of time several others of the man-of-war's men had

taken a fancy to this new mode of dancing, and having dragged their unwilling partners into the stream, they jilted away, every false step plunging them beneath the mimic waves they were themselves stirring up. In the midst of the spree, I contrived to get Watkins alongside, and having hauled him in, the two men out with their oars and gave way, and we were in a short time clear of the scene of action, though we could hear the noise long after we had lost sight of the Point by rounding the gun wharf.

The young girl had been removed to the seat abaft, and as she sat by my side, I had no opportunity of observing her features without impertinently staring her in the face. The little I had seen of her was extremely prepossessing, and as I was always of a *mercurial* temperament, the very fact of my having snatched her from insult and injury, began to attach me to her. "How came you to be placed in such an awkward situation as that I found you in?" inquired I.

"Oh, Sir," she replied, "it was indeed dreadful, I never could have believed, if I had not experienced it, that my own sex are so fallen and degraded."

"Of course you yourself are not—;" her quick thought guessed my meaning, and interrupting me, she prevented the utterance of expressions which would have given an additional wound to her feelings.

"Your suspicion is very natural, Sir," said she, "but no—no," she shuddered, and then added fervently, "I thank my God it is not so—I am wretched and unfortunate, Sir, with scarcely a friend in the world."

"What was the cause of your being attacked by those furies, then?" inquired I, with more of respect than I had hitherto manifested.

"The woman who first addressed me was intoxicated, I believe, sir," replied she, "and I fancy she was angry at my speaking to one of the men belonging to the Admiral's ship —."

"Jist as I said, Sir," exclaimed Samson, "Rum and jealousy—fire and flames—they madden the brain and burn the heart. Did you know the man, lovey?"

"I never saw him in my life before —," answered she with emphasis, "I am now in Portsmouth, which I entered about an hour since, for the first time, and inquired my way to the place where you found me."

"But you didn't never come there to look for marmalades, or cockle shells I take it," said Watkins.

"No—no, in truth I did not," responded the poor girl with a heavy groan, and then, addressing me, she asked, "Where are you taking me to, Sir? if it is possible I want to go to the Admiral's ship, there is some one there who I wish to see, one who has been my best—aye almost my only friend."

"I thought it wd come to that at last, lovey," said Samson in his good humoured way, "but they wont let you aboard to day without a ticket, seeing its not liberty day."

"Ticket," said she, "what is that for?"

"Why its a bit of chit from the skipper to the first leftenant, to let you hoist your trotters over the gangway," replied Watkins.

The poor girl seemed as much puzzled by the definition as she was by the term; but I explained it to her, and then asked her, "What object she had in view, and where she would like to be put ashore."

"All places are alike to me, Sir," answered she in mournful accents, accompanied by a movement of the

head which indicated loneliness and desolation.—At least I thought so, and I own that a desire crept into my heart that such should be the case in order that I might have the opportunity afforded of befriending her. “I am a stranger,” continued she, “and though you and these good men have acted kindly towards me, yet I am a lone female—God help me, I know not what to do,” and she covered her face with her hands, and wept bitterly.

What I felt at the moment I cannot describe; every faculty of my mind was so absorbed by the unfeigned grief of the poor girl by my side, that I did not observe till several minutes had elapsed, that Samson and Watkins had laid their oars athwart, and whilst one was clearing the *mist* from his eyes, the other was gazing with the most rueful aspect at “the sorrowing child.” It was nature responding to her own appeal—it was the still small voice passing from heart to heart—the fervent communion of spirit that unites human sympathies in one common bond, and prompts to generous deeds—an attribute of the deity himself imparted to his creatures for the wisest and the best of purposes.

“What are you about, men,” shouted I, on being aroused from my reverie by striking against a mooring buoy, “here we are drifting down the harbour again, and knocking a hole in the boat’s bows. Give way—give way, lads,—we shall be laughed at for lubbers.”

Silently the men obeyed, and now I began to be puzzled as to what was to be done with the young female thus thrown as it were upon my protection. To take her on board with me for any length of time, however innocently passed, would ruin her character; and to turn her adrift in a place like Portsmouth had some-

thing so repulsive in it, that the contemplation made me shudder. And who was to be her adviser? A giddy thoughtless youth of seventeen, actuated by impulse rather than governed by reason,—loving novelty for its ever-changing variety, and yielding to first impressions whether for good or evil. “Do you know any one in Portsmouth, or Portsea, or Gosport?” inquired I.

“Not a soul,” she sorrowfully replied; “I came from a long way in the country, and except a few hour’s rest during the darkness of the night, I have been travelling since yesterday at noon to get here. But we have passed all the shipping, sir,—where are you taking me to?—oh, in mercy—in pity, do not plunge me into deeper distress,” and she turned and looked imploringly in my face.

“If he does then I’m jigger’d,” exclaimed Samson vehemently, “I knows our officer too well for that. No—no, lovey, its all well enough for a spree ashore along with the skylarks, but not nobody ’ud ever go for to injure a helpless innocent.” Samson forgot that the poor wretches he had alluded to, were perhaps once as unstained and guiltless, as he supposed was the case with the person addressed.

The appeals of the poor girl’s tongue, but more especially the solemn adjuration on her countenance—which the short glance I had been allowed to take showed me was exceedingly interesting, if not altogether beautiful, decided me upon explaining to her without the slightest attempt at concealment, the situation in which she was exactly placed; and I trusted that my candor would have the effect of inducing a corresponding feeling, for I could not altogether restrain suspicions which naturally arose. She seemed more and more

shocked as I proceeded to display the danger she was in ; but I pledged my word and honor that no harm should happen to her if she would accompany me to the prize, where she should be provided with refreshment, and I hoped by the aid of the old quarter-master, on whose discretion and integrity I placed the firmest reliance, to strike out some plan for her future safety ; at the same time I gave a pretty broad hint that it would remove many unpleasant surmises if she would render me some information relative to the friend she had mentioned as being on board the *Gladiator*, and whom she was desirous of seeing, particularly whether it was in his power to extend that protection which a young female in her helpless condition so essentially required.

"I am indeed very—very grateful to you, Sir," said she, as the tears chased each other down her cheeks, "and I feel as if no one here would act unkindly or cruelly to me. You have indeed shown me the danger and difficulty I have brought upon myself, and yet, Sir, I could not help it ; I am wholly ignorant of the rules of men-of-war, and thought I might have immediately gone aboard the Admiral's ship, although perhaps they would not let me see him if I had," and she sobbed as if her heart would break. As soon as she was more calm, she continued : "I own I am faint and hungry, and you, Sir, perhaps have a sister ; for her sake then I implore you not to add to my distress by persecutions which will have no avail ; I may die, Sir, I may perish, but my good name never shall be tarnished."

"Nor shall it as far as I am concerned," returned I, "there is an old seaman in the vessel in whom you may fearlessly confide, his presence will be safety to you, and I believe he has acquaintances ashore who will

be able to take care of you till you can see or hear from this friend of yours."

"Alas, Sir, the manner of your uttering the words, 'friend of yours,' but too plainly tells me what you think," exclaimed she, "but oh, do not—do not condemn me because I cannot relate all I could wish; I will freely accept your offer of food and rest, and the protection of the aged, although perhaps I am wrong in doing so. Yet I need a friend, and if the seaman you have named will prove himself such, if he will find me a respectable place of shelter ashore, and direct me as to my future proceedings, I will hide nothing from him, indeed I will not."

In a few minutes we were alongside of the Spaniard, and the poor girl was assisted to the deck, where the veteran Dick received her with a rough grin and a shake of the head. "Beginning betimes, Muster —," said he, "a pretty lass too, clean run from stem to stern —."

"Avast old man!—avast!" exclaimed I, somewhat angrily, "you're running a head of your reckoning.—Go down below in the cabin, my dear, and boy get out the best you have, with some Malaga."

Dick remained silent, and the poor girl went below as desired, whilst I explained the whole occurrence to the quarter master; and as he was a native of and well known in Gosport, I inquired as to the probability of his finding her respectable lodgings.

The old man once more shook his head, and a look of mingling incredulity and surprise passed over his features, "young blood arnt easily tamed, Muster—," said he, "and I'm rather misdoubtful of the thing. Howsomever, if you please, I'll jist go down and cross question her a bit.—Poor young creatur, if so be as she

really wants a helping hand, and is deserv'ing of it, why it shall not never be said that ould Dick wouldn't show his colours to a ship in distress."

We descended to the cabin. "This," said I, presenting the old man, "is the person I spoke to you about. Make him acquainted with what--perhaps you did not wish me to learn, and I am sure he will be your friend--"

"Aye, all fair and above-board," exclaimed the veteran, "let your signals blow out clear--no mistification--all plain sailing, and I'm bless'd if I dont do all in my power to sarve you."

"May the Almighty reward you for the promise," returned the girl more assured; and as I looked upon her face, without being observed, I certainly thought that I had seldom seen any countenance more interesting or more lovely.

"And first and foremost, we'll come to the main-mast of the thing," said old Dick, "What brought you to Portsmouth?"

The poor girl looked down abashed, and the tears started to her eyes, but suddenly brightening up, as if instant recollection had come upon her, she produced a letter from her pocket, "If I could deliver this," said she, "it would explain all."

"Mayhap so, my precious--mayhap so," returned old Dick, "but that arnt never no answer to my question. Pray who's the thingemhe for?"

"It is for one who would indeed befriend me if I knew where to find him," replied she, handing the letter to the veteran. "Perhaps you can afford me the information."

Dick took the letter--spelt the direction, and turning

it over, inspected the seal — looked steadily and earnestly at the girl—then at the letter, and then at the girl again. Once more he perused the address, and hastily turning it, he broke the seal and tore it open. The young female started forward—a flush of anger kindled on her face. “Is it thus you mean to protect me?” exclaimed she, “return me my letter, and let me quit the ship.”

“Avast! my precious—avast!” uttered old Dick in his quiet way, “How can I diskiver what’s inside if I don’t shake out the reefs?—why jist now you wanted me to overhaul it.”

“No, no! not you!” exclaimed she; “the letter is not for you, and you can have no right to open or keep it from me.”

“Well, I’m bless’d young ooman if you arnt blowing that ere breeze pretty strong, anyhow,” vociferated the veteran, looking earnestly at the innocent cause of commotion—“if I arnt never got no right, who has?—Have the goodness, if you please, jist to read this here, sir—” handing me the letter, “and now my officer will tell you whether I’ve a right or not.”

Without hesitation I took the half opened letter, and looking on the direction, read aloud. “To Richard Wills, quarter-master of his majesty’s frigate the———”

CHAPTER II.

AT an early hour of the morning on which Jem Collins was to be tried, I manned my little boat, and was admitted, per favour, on board the *Gladiator*. Jem was

sitting in the stone galley, unfettered ; by his side, with her arm thrown round his neck, and her head resting on his breast, was the young female I had rescued from the furies upon Point beach, whilst opposite to them was seated the solicitor, who had taken great interest in the case ; and standing at his back was Dick Wills, listening with earnest attention to the directions of the professional gentlemen. Jem's look was more composed, but there was a deeper impression of anguish. The fair girl was weeping, but not aloud, lest she should disturb the lawyer in the advice he was giving. There was also another present—an elderly man, whose silvery looks were finely contrasted with a florid and healthy complexion : he was pacing the galley to and fro, with the steps and manner of one who was aware that he possessed considerable strength, and was not deficient in self-reliance. His dress was plain, but exceedingly clean ; and there was a good-humoured frankness about him, that prepossessed you at once in his favour.

Jem rose up on my entrance, but I requested him not to disturb himself, but to devote the whole of his mind to the counsel of the solicitor.

"I wool—I wool, Muster——," said he, much affected ; "but I should be wanting in duty and gratitude if I did not thank you, Sir, in regard o' Susan there, poor thing. She's all that's left to me in life, Muster ——, and kindness to her is tenfold kindness to me. God bless you, Sir—and may HE who knows what's passing muster in my heart, raise her up one or two such friends when I——" His feelings appeared to overpower him, and he again sat down.

"Your conduct to this poor girl has been very noble and generous, young gentleman," said the solicitor,

"and you merit the approbation of every friend to humanity."

"Aye—aye," uttered old Wills, in a quiet and placid sort of way. "But I'm thinking, Jem, it won't do for you to be making pump-suckers of your eyelids, when you comes afore the court.—As for Susan, why she shall never want a friend whilst ould Dick can weather the breezes of life; and, messmate, if I had known afore who you * 'lotted to, why you should not have wanted a helping hand, not by no manner of means."

"Your feelings do you credit, old man," said the solicitor; "but now I must crave every moment of Collins's time; and as you know a life is probably depending on it, I need not remind you of the value and importance of every minute."

"All right, yer honour," responded old Dick, "and I'm sure Muster——wishes him well."

"I do, indeed," uttered I, with emphasis; "and therefore shall not intrude any longer; keep up your spirits, Collins—all may yet be well."

The poor fellow gave a mournful shake of the head, as if he had already reasoned himself into what was likely to follow: he gave a look at Susan so full of misery, that it brought the tears to my eyes. The poor girl grasped my hand with fervour, but finding that I was nearly overcome, I hastily quitted the place.

Exactly at eight o'clock, the bow-gun of the *Gladiator* and the Court-martial flag at her mast-head announced the event that was to take place, and many a heart throbbed with emotion, for Jem was universally esteemed by all who knew him, whether ashore or afloat.

* The allotment of a seaman is a certain portion of his pay, that he leaves at home, to a wife or some other relative.

From half past nine to ten, the captains who were to compose the Court continued to arrive, and there was an incessant* piping of the side as they came on board, with the roll of the drum on the quarter-deck, and the marines presenting arms. Exactly at ten o'clock the Court was opened in the cabin of the guard-ship, and the usual oaths were administered. At the aft-most end of a long table covered with green baize, sat the President, with the captain of the frigate standing on his right, as prosecutor, whilst on each side of the table were seated five captains, according to seniority, having pens and paper before them. At the foremost end was the Judge Advocate, with his books and documents arranged, and on his left stood the provost-marshal, with his sword drawn. All preliminaries having been gone through, the command was given to bring up the prisoner, and the provost-marshal quitted the Court in obedience to the order;—a few minutes afterwards and he re-appeared with poor Jem, who was placed on the left of the Judge Advocate, and the provost-marshal, with his naked blade resting on his arm, stood a little on his flank. Whilst the arrangement was making, the prisoner did not raise his head; but on being called upon by name, he looked toward the President, and the array of officers was not calculated to inspire him with confidence. Nevertheless, after the first glance, he was calm and collected, and answered to his name with a firmness I did not expect from what I had previously seen. Old Dick had taken up a position as near to the prisoner as

* Whenever a commissioned officer comes into, or goes out of a ship, the boatswain for a captain, and either of his mates for a lieutenant, sounds his call at the gangway, as a token of respect due to his rank.

the nature of the circumstances would warrant; the solicitor had a small round table allowed him, at which he sat; and though in a great measure contrary to the strict rules of the Court-martial, he was permitted to take notes in order to prepare the prisoner's defence. Every part of the cabin, except that which was immediately abaft the President, was crowded with seamen—a space being left vacant on the right of the Judge Advocate, for the witnesses.

The charge for desertion was first entered into—the accusation was read amidst the deepest silence, and Jem, as it proceeded, paid the utmost attention, the muscles of his countenance plainly indicating the agitation of his mind, which by firmness he was struggling to quell. At the close a half-suppressed groan burst from him, as if till that moment he had not been aware of the full extent of his crime. Old Dick winced, but fixed his gaze steadily on the President—the humane Captain Graham Moore, the brother of the justly celebrated hero of Corunna.

Evidence was given relative to Jem's leaving the frigate in the barge, for the purpose of landing the captain—his being missed from it when the cockswain* came down at Sallyport to return on board, and his not having been seen in the ship, or resumed his duties previous to his apprehension.. Every thing was perfectly clear on the part of the prosecution, the accused declining to put any questions to the witnesses—indeed, he neither denied nor sought to palliate his offence.

“Call Lieutenant Mason,” exclaimed the President, and after a few repetitions of the name at the door of the cabin, a lieutenant in full uniform placed himself on the

* The original of this name was cock-a-stern, subsequently cock-stern.

right of the Judge Advocate. His head was bandaged with broad black riband, that confined the dressings of one or two wounds which appeared to have been severe—his right arm was in a sling, and it was evident, by the discoloured marks yet visible upon his cheeks, that he had been roughly handled. Jem drew his breath hissing for nearly half a minute, when the name was first pronounced, and on the appearance of the officer the prisoner assumed a look of defiance, and a crimson hue rushed over his face. Dick Wills, as impelled by some sudden impulse, made two steps in advance, gazed with a strong expression of mingling disgust and indignation; but becoming instantly sensible of the impropriety of his behaviour, he fell back again into his place. The lieutenant was a stout strong-built man, with remarkably repulsive features, small eyes, a cunning and lascivious curl of the mouth, and thick bull-neck. The examination commenced.

"Lieutenant Mason," said the Prosecutor, "you are, I believe, in the impress service at ——."

"I am, Sir," replied the lieutenant, in a thick hoarse voice. "I have the honour, Sir, to command the station——".

"We want to know nothing here of the honour conferred on you," said the President; rather roughly. "Have the goodness to give a plain statement of facts to the Court relative to the capture—I mean the apprehending of the accused."

The lieutenant bowed—looked at the President—then at the prisoner, and then at the President again—and thus began. "On the 13th day of March last I was called by circumstances to the village of ——, where I saw the prisoner; and understanding that he belonged

to the —— frigate, and was absent from his ship without leave, I, as a matter of course, in the routine of my duty, commanded him to surrender. This he refused, and on my attempting to seize him, he attacked me in the most violent manner, and my life was nearly sacrificed. My head was cut—my arm broken—and I received bruises and contusions in several parts of my body; and as you may perceive, gentlemen, I have not yet fully recovered from the effects."

"Were you alone, Mr. Mason, or were any of your men with or near you?" enquired the President.

"Unfortunately, Sir, I *was* alone at the time," returned the officer, "and certainly was not prepared for the resistance which I met with."

"Did the accused know who you were, witness?" asked one of the members of the Court.

"I am certain that he must have known, Sir," answered the Lieutenant, "and I have reason to believe that he had been previously informed."

"Of course you were in uniform, Mr. Mason?" observed the President, inquiringly.

"I had a great coat overall, Sir," answered the Lieutenant.

"Proceed," said the President.

The Lieutenant again bowed, and continued, "On being attacked thus furiously, and——"

"The attack forms the ground of a specific charge against the accused," said the Judge Advocate, "and therefore the Court will probably think it scarcely necessary to enter into details of it now.—The fact of desertion has been given in evidence, and it only remains to carry out the evidence to shew that the prisoner was taken into custody at a certain time and place. To go

repeated the Lieutenant, "I understood you was concealed somewhere there—"

"Answer the questions direct, witness," said the President, "we want nothing more than plain replies."

"Was I alone when you first saw me?" asked the prisoner, as he directed a keen look at the witness.

"No!—and yet I think at the first you were alone, though shortly afterwards you were joined by a stout elderly man," replied the Lieutenant.

"Did we not spring upon you together when the poor girl—"

"Eh, what is this," enquired the President, "we cannot sit here to listen to the nonsensical quarrels of a pack of ——"

"Avast, your honor," shouted Dick Wills, "she arnt that, and never was by —"

"Who is that man," demanded Captain Moore, rising with anger from his chair, "let him be instantly secured for disrespect to the Court."

Dick would have again spoke, but was prevented by several of his shipmates, whilst Jem who saw his only friend about to be removed, exclaimed in a voice that commanded attention, "Now, lord love your honor's noble heart, and every member of this here honorable Court—ould Dick never meant no offence to your honors; and as I believes you means to do every thing fair and above-board by a poor tar as is standing afore you houlding on atwixt life and death, why then, your honors, I hopes you wont send my best adviser away, especially as he ounly defended the innocent."

The Captain of the frigate addressed a few words to the President, explaining that they were messmates, and as he spoke with some earnestness I did entertain a

hope that the kindlier feelings of the skipper's nature were beginning to operate in Jem's favour, although it was equally probable that his interference arose from a rigid sense of justice and fair play. Dick however after a suitable apology was allowed to remain, the confusion subsided, and Jem repeated his question, omitting all allusions to the female.

"It is possible that you might," returned the Lieutenant, "but I rather think you were the first who struck me."

"Had you commanded me then to surrender?" demanded the prisoner, "I mean to surrender as a deserter."

"No!" returned the Lieutenant, and instantly there was the rustling of paper amongst the members of the Court, who scanned their notes, and then glanced at each other, whilst a slight buzz arose amongst the audience; Mason however appeared to recollect himself, "Your attack was so sudden that you did not afford me time."

"You have said, Sir," questioned Jem, "that you were entirely alone—may I just ask you what becomed of the two men as you left outside the cottage on the watch."

"I cannot tell you of my own knowledge," returned the Lieutenant, "but certainly I saw nothing of them afterwards."

The members of the Court took down the reply, and again glances of meaning were exchanged amongst them. Old Dick whispered to the prisoner, who nodded assent and asked, "You have said, Sir, that you had been informed that I was absent from my ship without leave, just tell their honors whether you received that informa-

tion afore or arter the attack we made upon you—for Jem arnt never the boy to deny his actions?"

"It was subsequent to the attack," replied the witness, after some degree of hesitation, during which Jem almost unconsciously winked at the President to the great amusement of those who saw it.

"Subse—subsekent," muttered Jem doubtingly, "does that mean arter the bobbery?" the Lieutenant nodd acquiescence.—"Then I ax you Muster Mason," continued Jem, "if it was arter the attack, how did you know I was a deserter, and how came you to say that you had been informed I was concealed somewhere thereabout?"

"Prisoner, I cannot at present see how these questions are to benefit you," said the President, "You are confining yourself to the attack upon your superior officer, whereas the charge on which you are being tried is for desertion."

"In course, your honor," answered Jem respectfully, "and I don't mean to go for to say I didnt leave the boat clandexterously—I knows well enough I did do it, and Muster Mason knows well enough what caused me to do it. But, your honors, this I will say, and I appeal to the Commander-in-chief who sarches the heart, whether it beats under a tarry jacket or a uniform coat, that I never intended to desart my colors or leave the sarvice—"

"You must reserve that for your defence, my man," said the President with gentleness, prompted by humanity, "Have you any more questions to put to the witness?—The subject seems to be involved in much mystery."

"I have one question your honor," returned Jem,

"Pray Muster Mason, with all due respect and civility, should you recollect the ould boy as lent me a hand to ———' Dick touched his arm, "I means the individual as joined me in the attack."

"The villain!—Yes," returned the Lieutenant, "I should know him the moment I saw him."

"All well and good, your honors," uttered Jem, bowing to the Court, and raising his right hand to his forelock, "I got nothing more to ax the officer.—Yet avast—pray Muster Mason what time o'day was it?"

"In the evening, somewhere about two bells* in the second dogwatch," answered the Lieutenant.

"You're right," assented Jem, "and gemmen I've done."

The next witness was the Sergeant, who received the prisoner, and brought him to the Gladiator, which he deposed to.

"Did I make any resistance, Sergeant?" asked Jem.

"None in the least, you quietly surrendered yourself," replied the Sergeant, "I came up immediately after the affray, and observing the villagers collected together over a prostrate man whom they were ill-using, I naturally took part with the weakest."

"When did you first see me, Sergeant?" enquired the poor fellow.

"Why let me see," returned the person addressed, "you was in the cottage, and a young woman clinging round your neck and crying as if her heart would break."

"Poor thing, and so she was," uttered the prisoner mournfully, "don't you think I might have cut and run out of that if I had been so minded?"

"If you mean whether you could have escaped, I

* Seven o'clock.

should say you certainly might," answered the Sergeant, "that is before you surrendered, for I knew nothing of the affair when I first entered the cottage."

"You have spoken of a prostrate man, Sergeant," said the President, "Inform the Court who that prostrate man was."

"Leftenant Mason, Sir," replied the Sergeant, "he was on the ground insensible."

"Did he not give the accused into your charge?" asked one of the members of the Court.

"No, Sir," replied the man, "as soon as I learned the true state of the case, I required Collins to surrender, and he did so immediately."

This closed the prosecution, and it appeared to be as pretty a piece of mystification as could be well conceived. It was evident however that there was something yet to come—a key to unravel all this tangled web, and the probability was that we should have it in the defence. A few minutes was allowed to Collins to consult with his friend and Solicitor, and then upon being called upon by the President, he advanced to the table, laid his hand firmly on his breast, bent his head in respect, and began in a clear and sonorous voice.

"Gentlemen and noble Captains of this here honorable Court, I stands afore you charged with desertion, when God knows my heart, I never meant to desert, as I've sarved my King faithfully, and have always done my duty like a man; ax my own Commander whether alow or aloft, in foul weather or in fair, in the barge or at my gun, Jem was ever the lad to flinch."—"The skipper responded in a loud tone, "Never! you was the best man in the ship."—"And yet your honors here I am. Yes, I, Jem Collins, am here, in as dubersome a

situation as a jolly berthed upon a main truck," a smile passed round, but Jem was too 'serious to joke. "Well then your honors, if leaving the boat clandestinely, and going away without leave is desarting, I did desart, and you shall know why. I arnt never going to overhaul a long yarn about my father and mother, they are safe moored where I hope one day Jem will clap 'em alongside.—But your honors they died when I was young, and left poor Susan and me—orphans, with the world for our resting place, and the pity of mankind to feed upon."

"Stop one minute, prisoner," said the President, "I spoke harshly to you a short time since, supposing that your mention of a girl had reference to some base woman.—Pray was the girl you spoke of your sister?"

"She was indeed, your honor," responded Jem, in a mournful tone and with a shake of the head.

"I have then to express my regret that I offended your feelings," said the President.

In course, your honor," responded Jem, who did not appear to comprehend the honourable conduct of Captain More. "Yes, she was my ounly sister, and we were left poor and desolute orphans, like the babes in the wood. But 'never mind Susan,' says I, 'an honest lad as is willing to work,' says I, 'will alays find grub for hisself, and enough for a messmate, if he ounly keeps a sharp look out to windward,' so your honors I carries on happy-go-lucky till I gets second mate of a marchant-man—helping Susan all as lays in my power till I gets pressed, and then I' lots as if she'd been my wife, and my heart was happy to think as she could weather a breeze. On the very day as I left the boat, your honors, a letter comed to me to say that Susan had been run

foul on by a pirate as showed false colors, and if it had'nt have been for an ould gemman as man-handled the pica-rooning wagabone, and made him sheer off, why mayhap there'd have been another added to the list of on-fortunates, and I should never have held up my head again;—for the dying commands of my parents would have alays rung in my ears whenever I went aloft, and their spirits would have shook the clews of my hammock every night I turned in. Your honors I could'nt beat to windward against it—I was afeard to ax the Captain for leave lest he should refuse, and 'arter all Jem,' says I to myself, 'it is but straining a pint, and you'll be aboard again in a couple of days,' so your honors to make long of the short it, I gets Abrahams on the *Hard*, and *hard* enough he was for the matter o'that—to take my power and pay out the cash, and off I starts for home. I know your honors that this warnt by no manner o' means ship-shape, and mayhap if I'd axed the skipper," looking towards the Captain, "I should'nt have passed three months in the darbies, nor been standing here now with about as many friends as a widow's pig. Howsomever I never went to think of the upshot of the consarn, and when I brought up at the cottage and saw Susan safe and well, and the ould boy as had stood her protector, why your honors I felt so howdaciously joyful, that I scarcely knew my stem from my starn—it slued me eend for eend, but when they tould me that the piratical wagabone was likely to come cruizing in the neighbourhood again, it threw me slap up in the wind, and there I was like the Yankee's schooner, jammed a-twixt two breezes, without knowing which tack to stand upon. Your honours knows what home is with plenty o'*shiners*—there's the places you've played in when boys,

and there's the log book of memory with its dead reckoning of them as is gone afore, and then there's ould acquaintances and playmates, and all that takes turn after turn round the heart—and I never tould 'em I was absent without leave, but the ould gemman axed me, and I said I was on liberty, and everything went on as merry as if it had been the 4th of June * all the week long. One day my ould friend—who he was nobody knowed, and as he shook a cloth in the wind why nobody cared;—well, he comes to me and opens out a piece o' news that the fellow as had grappled with Susan was coming that very night with some of his men to carry her off to his cutter.—Well, your honors, I hardly didn't hoist it all in, but the ould un swore to it, and so we concealed ourselves in the cottage. Muster Mason has tould you the hour they came, but when we—that's me and the ould-un—bore up out of port upon the enemy as he grappled Susan—the two men as was watching outside slipped their cables and put to sea, leaving their commander to ——Avast, he's tould you himself. I owns your honors that I did give him a broadside with now and then a longshot, but his worst mauling he got from the villagers till the swaddies came, and the Sergeant being a civil well spoken man, and feeling I'd been playing the monkey long enough, I surrendered without any palaver, and here I am afore you. I knows I've done wrong and ought to suffer, but if you goes for to hang Jem Collins like a dog, why then you'll hang as good a seaman as ever spliced a cable, or took a trick at the wea-

* The day on which the anniversary of George the Third's birth was commemorated, and sailors enjoyed a double allowance of grog. Intoxication on this day seldom if ever met with punishment.

ther wheel—and a man who loves his King and his country, barring Billy Pitt, and is ready as he has done afore to fight the French, and all who stand up for them. So your honours may just do as you like, its all the same to Jem, except in regard of Susan, though I hope and trust she has found a friend, as ull never forsake her. That's all I have got to say your honors ; Captain —— will give me karackter, for he carnt never say black's the white of my eye. So now if you pleases I'll just thank you to call my ould friend Edward Sprangfield into Court."

Jem's defence had been given with characteristic reckless humour and good feeling, and not a doubt could remain on the mind of any individual present of its truth. It was not, strictly speaking, such a defence as under other circumstances would probably have been allowed, but Graham Moore was himself a seaman of high-wrought feeling, and though plain and blunt in his manners and address, he nevertheless possessed much of the acute sensibility of the author of *Zeluco*, whose brother he was, as well as the intrepidity of him who slept beneath the walls of Corunna. There was a mystery in the evidence which had been given that would have taken days to have fathomed by cross-examination. Jem's plain advocacy of himself had in few words developed the whole, and the conduct of Mason, whatever the result of the trial should be, was from henceforth stamped with infamy.

The name of Edward Sprangfield had been called several times, when the same good humoured face I had seen in the stone galley presented itself, and its appearance evidently produced a sensation in the Court. The President rose from his chair, smiled, and beckoned the

witness towards him, but the latter modestly declined, whilst several of the Captains evidently appeared to recognize him. His dress had undergone a change, and he was now habited in a style suitable to his years, but yet in the most genteel manner, and nothing about him remained the same except his face and silvery hair. Jem started with astonishment,—old Dick however seemed to be somewhat in the secret, for he gave one of his self-gratified looks, hitched up his trowsers and nodded his head to the solicitor.

“Do you answer to the name of Edward Sprangfield?” enquired the President with respect, but at the same time with singular archness.

“I do, Sir,” replied the witness, “but I suppose my *nomme de guerre* must now be laid aside, still I am the person who has been known and mentioned as Edward Sprangfield.”

The President bowed, and there were not a few in the Court who pressed eagerly forward to look at the witness, whilst a low murmuring buzz of applause arose amongst the older seamen when they recognized the features of a worthy but eccentric Admiral, who, though owner of a splendid estate and immense wealth, was accustomed to wander about the country in disguise, dispensing his bounty under an assumed name in his own peculiar way.

“Will you be good enough to state to the Court your real name and rank?” requested the President.

Jem advanced a step so as to overreach the Judge Advocate, and never was astonishment more strongly marked on the countenance of a human being as the witness replied, “John Augustus M ———, Admiral of the White.”

"Whew-we," whistled Jem, "a pretty mess o'chowther I've made of it," then turning to his messmate, "I say Dick, what does all this here mean? is it gammon ar right arnest?"

"Avast, Jem, avast," returned Wills, "belay all them 'ere questions just now, you'll find it all square and atant-o presently."

"The prisoner has called you in his defence Admiral," said the President, "pray favor the Court with what you may have to say in his behalf."

At this moment Mr. Mason entered, and looking at the witness, certainly Gorgon's head never appeared with more staring eyes,—he instantly recollected the features, but the dress puzzled him, however he felt satisfied the old man—Edward Sprangfield stood before him, though in what capacity and station of life he was then ignorant, still as corroborative of the testimony he had given, he without being questioned, exclaimed, "This is the man who joined in the attack, and knocked me down, I could tell the fellow any where."

"You are right," answered the veteran, "and but for the respect due to the Court, old as I am, I would knock you down again."

"Have you no knowledge of the witness? Mr. Mason," enquired one of the members of the Court.

"None whatever, Sir," returned the Lieutenant with a look of indignant contempt at the veteran. "He is better dressed than when I last saw him, but I make no doubt, gentlemen, that you will find him out to be some impostor."

"You be ——" uttered Jem, in a tone of thunder that made the cabin echo, but he was not allowed to finish the exclamation, for Dick Wills's hand was pressed

upon his mouth, and though something was spluttered out, yet the precise term no one could determine, though it sounded very much like "dum—um—muff—ushed."

There was evidently a great sensation in the Court, both amongst the judges and the audience, and by some perversion of intellect the Lieutenant construed it into approval of his own line of procedure. But no language can describe his confusion and dismay when the President, without noticing the observations of Mason, uttered, "Admiral, will you have the goodness to proceed?" The Lieutenant seemed paralyzed, he did not breathe for nearly a minute, whilst his color went and came like the expiring embers of a lamp-wick. Nor did the Admiral make any other response to Mason's insinuation than by a look of cool scorn as he began, "I am not here, Sir, to explain why or wherefore it is that I like to enjoy a roving commission. I presume the fact will suffice that I do so, and that in one of my cruises I received kind attention at a cottage where fortune brought me up all-standing. I revisited the berth, and was happy enough to rescue a young female from the violence of a scoundrel, whom I well thrashed," he looked towards the Lieutenant. "On a subsequent occasion I found the prisoner there, but believed him to be on liberty. — His honest and straight-forward manners pleased me, and fearing that he might outstay his leave, I again set out to visit the cottage. In my way I became acquainted with the intention of the individual to carry off the young female I had on a former occasion protected. The prisoner and I concealed ourselves to await the event,—Mr. Mason there, came with two men to effect his purpose, and whilst he was dragging away the sister of the prisoner we rushed upon him, and he

struck directly. The villagers were so exasperated with the audacity of the fellow, that they towed him out, and administered a punishment that I hope will not be forgotten. The Sergeant and his party came up, and Collins surrendered. I then ascertained that he was a deserter, and as a point of strict duty, left things to take their own course, determined to appear at a proper time and tender my evidence before the Court Martial. Gentlemen, I have done so, and have nothing more to add except that as a matter of opinion I must do Collins the justice to express my conviction, that he had no intention of leaving his Majesty's service."

A hum of applause went round the cabin when the Admiral had closed his plain manly statement. Mason slunk away, but the occurrence had found its way to the quarter-deck, and he was shunned by every one.

A few questions of an unimportant nature were put to the Admiral. The Captain and some of the officers were next examined as to the character of the prisoner, and all concurred in speaking of him in the highest terms. The Court was then cleared—the members were left alone, and during an interval of twenty minutes duration, the most thrilling anxiety prevailed. At the expiration of that time the Court was re-opened, the cabin was crowded almost to suffocation, and the quarter-deck was one scene of eager excitement.

There was a serious gravity on the countenance of the members of the Court which neither the confusion nor the attempts to suppress it affected in the smallest degree. Any one might have seen that Jem's fate was sealed, and though all tried to delude themselves into a belief to the contrary, yet none were surprised when Captain Moore declared their verdict to be guilty, and

pronounced sentence of death, to be executed at such time and on board such one of his Majesty's ships as the King in Council should appoint.

Yes, such was the judgment upon poor Jem, and for several minutes a low murmuring sound was heard in all parts of the ship—it was only two words that were uttered, but they passed from tongue to tongue, in mournful accents—**GUILTY—DEATH.**

CHAPTER III.

It was a curious spectacle to witness the striking and remarkable contrast displayed in the manners and features of Dick Wills and Jem Collins, when the President of the Court pronounced the awful sentence that was to consign the unfortunate prisoner to a death of shame. The crime of desertion was at that time viewed in a more heinous light than even that of murder, and to such a pitch of devotion had our thorough man-of-war's men been brought, that they themselves were ready at all times to admit the justice of the severest punishment for this offence. But Jem's case had peculiar circumstances connected with it—the evidence of one whose word was revered as much as gospel, had tended to prove that the seaman did not intend to desert, though he certainly had committed a very gross breach of discipline ; yet there was his youth, the heedlessness of a sailor, and the provocation he had received strongly pleading in his favour ; and his old friend, Dick Wills, as well as the tars generally, hoped that it would

have such an effect upon the Court as to produce powerful feelings of commiseration, and lead them to inflict a mere nominal punishment. Jem, however, thought differently, for he knew that he had practised deception in stating that he was upon leave, and that though the Court might have dealt leniently with him had he returned immediatly to his duty, yet, his remaining away as he did could bring nothing else but punishment of a severe nature ; in fact, he had all along contemplated that such a sentence would be passed, and when he beheld the grave and solemn countenances of his judges, on his once more being called before them,—and that for the last time,—he saw his fate was sealed, and he nerved himself for the worst. When condemnation was passing, and every one present was drawing his breath convulsively, with a groan, or a sigh, or a hissing noise of agony, Jem alone stood firm—the respect he had hitherto manifested to the Court was not altogether forgotten, but the remembrance of it was the last effort of a humbling before his fellow-creatures. The world and its distinctions of rank and title, appeared to be passing rapidly away ; death stood fronting him with his dart upraised ; and boldly erecting himself upon the basis of determined resolution and manly courage, the hardy tar looked as if he would neither court nor resist the blow : not a muscle of his countenance was agitated for an instant ; the deep tones of the respected and gallant President Graham Moore, as he pronounced the word “Death,” whilst it sounded like a knell to every heart present, had no other effect upon Jem than to give a set firmness to his features,—not in contempt or defiance of the law,—but as the proper bearing of a British seaman in an hour of extreme peril, and as one, whom the cer-

tainty of death itself, though armed with its worst terrors, could not compel to shrink with alarm. There he stood, cool, calm, and bold ; his figure upright, with his chest thrown a little forward ; and with his eyes resting rather than fixed upon the humane Graham Moore, whose voice faltered and whose features quivered towards the close of his address, and when it ceased Jem slowly and respectfully bowed.

The head of Dick Wills sank down upon his breast as the dreadful words relative to execution reached his ears. The sentence, as far as the punishment extended, he knew was in conformity with the articles of war, but still he expected that under the peculiar circumstances of the case there would be, at least, a recommendation to mercy, or some mitigating qualification to relieve the mind from apprehensions that the extreme penalty would be carried into force. But not a breath escaped ; not a sound was heard ; not a word was uttered to ameliorate the prisoner's fate ; it was doom without the slightest hope of alleviation being held out, doom, certain and inevitable doom. It smote heavily upon the heart of Dick Wills ; it stopped the free current of his blood ; he was awed, subdued, and sinking into the timid weakness of childhood.

Many a sob, and many a "God bless him" fell upon Jem's ears as he walked with becoming firmness from the presence of his judges to the place he had occupied previous to his trial. His sister was not there : she had been kindly removed by the boatswain's wife to her husband's cabin, and was as yet ignorant of the decision of the Court. Poor Jem quietly seated himself in the stone galley ; he could hear the busy bustle that was going on as the boats belonging to the different members of the

Court took their departure. The impressive scene in which they had so recently performed a prominent part was already partly erased from their minds; they were going to duty or to pleasure, whilst the condemned looked only to that end, the ignominy of which would embitter more than all the rest the very last moments of his existence.

In front of Jem stood Dick Wills gazing with subdued energies, yet more than ever alive to the acutest sensibility. "It's over, Jem," said the veteran mournfully, "I'd rather it had been me than you, messmate, for I always felt towards you, Jem, a someut as got double-bitted round my heart, and the heavier the gale as blow'd again it the tauter the nip was. It was a onixpressible gratification to my owld soul, Jem, when I seed you climbing up into favour as if you was mounting Jacob's ladder,* and an angel upon every rattlin to 'tice you aloft—"

"Well, messmate, and I hope I *shall* go aloft with angels for my guides," uttered Jem, interrupting the old seaman, "Who can say that, barring this here consarn, I ever refused or neglected my dooty. I knowed it ud come to this, Dick, ever since that ere night I tould you on, when the purser's dip guv me warning of my fate." This was said in sincerity of spirit, and in the most solemn manner, for Collins firmly believed that *that* which was nothing more than a common occurrence arising from a strong draft of wind had been presented to his sight as a prognostic of his futre destiny. "They shant see me shrink, Dick! Though to die the death of a dog," he spoke through his compressed teeth,

* The rope ladder is so called leading from the quarter-deck into the main shrouds.

"with thousands staring at me—to be made an example on for what I'm sure I never meant to do—I tell you what it is, messmate—it breaks my heart." The strong man bowed his head—his imagination had sketched out the spectacle in vivid colors—he felt the rectitude of his own intentions, however faulty he had been, and covering his face with his hands, nature was no longer to be repressed. But it did not last long, and old Dick, though at first sensibly affected, yet aroused all his latent faculties to grapple with the emergency of the moment.

"Cheer up, messmate," said he with firmness, "it ull never do to bag down to looard in a gale, and make no more weather-way than a haystack adrift. Come, luff you may boy, and though all hope of safety may be passed, yet remember there's ONE who knows what you are, and ull never forsake them as axes for help. As for Susan—"

"Where is she, poor thing," inquired Jem, "I should like to see her, messmate, and God bless you, I know you'll befriend her."

At this moment the door opened, and Admiral M— entered; Jem would have risen but the veteran waved his hand for him to keep still. "I am come to take my leave of you, Collins," said he, "Is there any request that you have to make, or is there any thing I can do for you before my departure?"

"I have ownly to ax pardon of your honor for making so free," returned Jem, "and to thank your honor from my very sowl for what you said on me to day. May God reward your honor for all favors both to me and Susan."

"Well, my man, as I can do nothing for you—at least you appear to have no request to make, I must

give you a little of my advice," said the Admiral. "And first of all lay aside and for ever all parlay about 'Your honor,' which seldom means more than 'You're an old fool.' Act like the man you have always been until this unfortunate affair; keep up your firmness; and don't let the weakness of human nature get the better of the color of your jacket. If you must die for your fault,—and I cannot, I am sorry to say, hold out the smallest encouragement that your life will be spared,—still, if you are to expiate your offence at the yard arm, go to the platform as you would to your gun, fearless and undismayed. But as I know there will be struggles in the breast which no spirit, however dauntless, can wholly subdue, means must be employed to keep the mind free from those things that are apt to distract the attention and unnerve the heart. When the day is to be has not yet been named, but as the fleet is now at Spithead, and an example is wanting, I think your time here will be very short. The clergyman will pay you every kind attention; but whilst devoting your thoughts to an hereafter of eternal duration, your mind should be kept free from all affairs connected with this world. Your sister,"—Jem writhed and old Dick groaned—"Your sister, Collins, shall never suffer want or privation again; she is a good girl, and I will be her friend and protector. But she must not remain here, Collins; it would be an injury to her character, and could do you no good. She must go on shore with me, and remain there until the day is fixed, and then you may take your last leave of her."

"But your hon—I ax pardon, I meant to say, may I not see her afore she goes, jist to let her know that I am prepared," inquired Jem.

"Well for a few minutes perhaps you may be indulged with an interview," returned the Admiral, "but it will be only on condition that you say not one word about your sentence or the untimely fate that awaits you. Believe me, Collins," and the Admiral seemed deeply affected, "I do feel most acutely your present situation, and would recommend nothing that I did not conceive was for your real advantage."

"I know it your—that is, Edward—Muster Sprang—I'm jammed hard up, and that's true, in regard o' names," uttered Jem rather vehemently. "But one thing I knows from past experience, and that is, you means and does all for the best."

"That is my design," returned the Admiral, "and in this instance, however difficult the matter is, still I think I am right. Therefore let us understand each other. Susan as yet knows nothing of your sentence—you shall see her, but do not betray it to her—she is not acquainted with me otherwise than as Edward Sprangfield—you see I have resumed my old dress—do not by the least act lead her to suspect who I am. Part with her as if it was only till to-morrow, and leave the rest to me. Do you consent to this?"

"Why in course he must, Admiral," answered old Wills. "Arut it for his good every bit on it—why don't you say you wool, Jem?"

"Most sartinly, I'll be guided by his hon—that is, the Admiral," assented Collins; "his promised kindness to Susan when I'm hove down for a full due has taken a taut strain from my heart, and as far as she, poor thing, is consarned, I shall die in peace."

"Farewell then, Collins," said the Admiral much and deeply affected, though he strove hard to retain his

equanimity of temper, "In this world, my man, perhaps we may never come within hail of each other again, yet I trust we shall meet in another and a better, 'where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.' Attend to the counsel of the clergyman, and under his instruction fortify your mind, whilst you humble your spirit. Do not detain Susan long—I will send her to you, and await her return—remember the injunctions I have given you—and once again farewell,"—he gave an earnest look at the condemned man and quitted the galley.

In a few minutes afterwards, Susan came in with the solicitor, but it was evident that she was wholly ignorant of the nature of the sentence, having being cheated into the belief that the trial was not yet over, and hitherto had assumed a favourable aspect for her brother, and that her assistance was required on shore to procure further evidence. The parting was not so affecting as might have been expected by those who knew the facts, for Susan felt certain that she should return on the morrow, whilst poor Jem retained his fortitude and presence of mind, and as long as she appeared cheerful he seemed to be content. She bade him be of good cheer; exhorted Dick Wills to remain with and assist him; threw her arms round his neck and wept upon his breast—that breast which was soon to cease from emotion in the stillness of the grave; and, forcing a smile through her tears, she hurried away.

Within two hours from the period above recorded, an elderly man, in a seaman's dress, and with a seaman's freedom of manners, was seated outside the Portsmouth coach bound to the metropolis. By his side was a young and interesting female, with the traces of recent sorrow.

on her countenance, and not unfrequently the large round drop was visible rolling down her cheeks. These were the worthy Admiral and Susan Collins—the former had told the poor girl sufficient of her brother's awful situation to excite her alarm without overpowering her reason, and he had suggested an immediate application to high authority for the purpose of trying to avert the young man's fate. To describe the unhappy girl's agony when the facts were revealed to her would be impossible, but as a shadow of hope was held out, she unhesitatingly acquiesced in the arrangements of her kind friend, and together they started for the metropolis, where they arrived on the following morning, and the Admiral left her at the inn, whilst he went out, as he said, "to make some necessary inquiries;" nor did he appear again till late in the evening, and then it was only to request Susan to be in readiness early the next day to accompany him in furtherance of the object they both had in view.

Poor Susan slept but little that night, and at the earliest dawn of day she dressed herself and awaited the summons; but it was full two hours before it came, and then she found the Admiral, — whom she still only knew as Edward Sprangfield, — awaiting her. In a few words, he spoke humbly of his own ability to effect much good; but promised his best exertions, through the medium of an old commander, who might probably take an interest in his welfare. He then placed her in a hackney coach, and, giving directions to the driver, he left her. Great was the surprise and dismay of the poor girl when, after traversing several streets, the vehicle entered a spacious park and stopped at an unseemly fashioned door in a long wall, at some distance beyond which appeared the summit of an ancient building. Here she remained in

agitation and-surprise for nearly an hour, when the door suddenly opened, and a gentleman approaching the coach assisted her to alight, and passing her arm within his own they entered a magnificent garden, where the exotics were evidently rich and rare. The shrinking girl trembled with alarm, nor could the gentle and persuasive language and manners of her companion restore her to tranquility. In vain he tried to assure and strengthen her mind by declarations that she had nothing to fear, and that it was absolutely essential to her application that she should calm the excess of her grief and apprehension. He spoke of her brother and his extreme peril; of his desire to befriend her and advance her suit, through his regard for the person who had attended her on her journey; and at length, by degrees, he soothed the turbulence of her feelings and directed all her thoughts to the consideration of poor Jem. He informed Susan that it was not in his own immediate power to alter or amend the sentence that had been passed, but that she would soon be in the presence of a lady whose pleading might do much in her brother's behalf.

Scarcely had he proceeded thus far in his counsel when, on turning into another and more shady walk, Susan found herself at once before a party of three ladies—the plainest dressed, an elderly and matronly female of rather repulsive features, and with sharp piercing eyes, whilst by her side walked a veteran officer, arrayed in the full uniform of a vice-admiral of the British navy. Confused and abashed, Susan would have shrunk back, but that her companion retained firm hold of her hand and whispered, "Remember; it is for your brother's life!" The appeal, gentle as it was, produced its full effect; and though she did not ven

her head, yet there was a spirit striving in her heart that nerved her frame.

The ladies were close to her, and she heard one of them in a voice that sounded harshly to her ear, assert the impossibility of interference in her behalf—"I should exceed my duty to the king," said she in a foreign accent, "if I attempted to exert any influence I may possess to avert the fate of a traitor to his country, and such must ever be those who desert the royal colors."

There was a low response uttered with respectful dignity, and yet not without firmness; but Susan could only catch disjointed words, and even not sufficient of them to connect together so as to comprehend the purport of his speech.

"No one values you, Admiral, as a long tried and faithful servant of his king and country, more than myself," responded the lady with more mildness, "my duty to his majesty, and the regard I cherish for his honor and happiness, must needs make me esteem those who have added lustre to his name. But I am told, Admiral, that it was over-lenity to the seamen which caused the mutiny at the Nore, and now when desertions are so frequent it is absolutely necessary—I use the king's own words—it is absolutely necessary that examples should be made.—You may conjecture, Admiral, what it must cost a female's heart to make so determined an avowal.—Had it been any thing but desertion—"

Susan felt all her energies revive.—The words that were last uttered thrilled through her bosom, for she knew that Jem had no intention to desert, and at once falling on her knees before the speaker, she clasped her hands together and exclaimed, "Oh lady, dear lady, he never meant to run away—he revered his king—he

loved his country, and would have died for either, or for both. Oh, hear my unhappy history, lady—an orphan, with no other protector in existence besides my brother,—it was to save me—to rescue me from villainous schemes that must have brought me to dishonour and shame, that he left his ship,—and is he to die—must he suffer death because he acted a brother's part towards a sister? No lady, you will not permit it; the sanction of a high-born and noble female, for that such you are I need no telling, will never be given to such injustice,” she warmed as she proceeded, “we are weak and defenceless, and shall a brother's life be sacrificed because he redressed a sister's wrongs? Lady, you have a tender heart, and you have power—I know you have—oh, let me implore—let me beg of you, by every hope of mercy, by every feeling of pity, to intercede in his behalf, and preserve to his majesty a brave and devoted seaman, ready to peril life and limb against his king and country's foes. He has erred, lady, but, indeed, indeed he is not criminal,—England does not contain a more honest and intrepid spirit—then for England will I entreat that his life may be spared,—the king does not possess a braver seaman or more loving subject—then on behalf of my sovereign I would plead that he may yet be suffered to live and prove his devotion by his future conduct.—I will urge my suit as an affectionate sister praying for a brother's life, and above all that he may be spared that which is worse than death itself to him—a public execution. Here will I kneel lady—my frame shall grow to the very ground on which I now am, even things inanimate shall feel for me, and echo the prayer of my supplication.—Yet I need not be thus urgent.—Lady, by the warm gush of relative affection within your own

gentle bosom—by the ties which ought to bind the weaker sex together—by all that is dear in heaven or on earth, I know you will undertake my cause, and bid me once more smile in gladness—The God who rules the universe will commend the gracious deed, and I—oh, lady, my very heart itself shall be gratitude, and my last breath shall pass away in blessing you.”

There have been many instances in which the pressing exigency of circumstances has inspired the tongue with eloquence, and this was one of them.—The mode of address—the mournful yet fervent cadences of a voice particularly harmonious—the touching sadness of her tones, like the harps of the Israelites as they hung upon the willows—all must have conspired to have melted obduracy had it prevailed. But more than one hysteric sob as she proceeded evinced that the angel-wing of pity was sweeping over the chords of woman’s sympathy, which vibrated with the touch, and produced a sweet communion of spirit.

Susan was silent—she had not perceived that at the very outset of her appeal the group had been joined by a tall elderly nobleman—for such the star on his breast announced him to be—habited in a blue frock coat with red collar and cuffs, but singularly plain in the rest of his apparel. “What—what is this?” he falteringly inquired when the poor kneeling girl had finished—“How—how came she here—sad tale, very sad tale—very, very sad indeed—but justice must take its course—Admiral, I did not expect this—Charlotte—Charlotte, this must not happen again. Who, who, who brought the poor thing here?”

There was the silence of a full minute without reply—Susan looked up towards the naval officer with a

countenance of earnest beseeching ; but who can paint the conflicting emotions of her mind, when in the person of the aged Admiral, who stood with head uncovered, she recognized her companion and her friend Edward Sprangfield. Perplexed as she was as to the change, still his presence was the renewal of life to her hopes, and with breathless attention she heard him with the utmost respect proclaim, that he only was responsible for the presumption of stealing an interview, and added, "my statement respecting these poor children has been already made, and as in my sovereign's hands is the issue of life and death, so I must resign them to the disposal of your majesty."

The last words came for a moment like thunder-claps to poor Susan's ears ; her brain reeled giddily ; her senses swam round ;—but again rallying her fading energies, she exclaimed, "My king ; my queen ! Mercy ; mercy !" and fell senseless to the ground. It was many hours before there was a perfect restoration to sensibility ; and when she looked out from the bed on which she was lying, the past flitted before her as some strange dream. But reality followed, and a communication from the Admiral, whilst it directed her return to Portsmouth and amply furnished the means, yet failed to hold out the smallest expectations of a mitigation of doom ; indeed, the day had been appointed and was close at hand. This was sad news for Susan, and, almost broken-hearted and despairing, she quitted the metropolis.

The fated morning at last arrived, Jem had been removed to the frigate the night before, and though his fortitude remained unshaken, yet he sickened at the thought of the disgrace which awaited him, and would

be for ever coupled with his name. Thirteen sail of the line and numerous frigates and small crafts were moored at Spithead, under orders for sea the day after this melancholy sacrifice had been made. The captain had granted the use of the forecabin to the prisoner, where, attended by the garrison chaplain, Jem was receiving the best consolations of religion, to strengthen his mind for the last dread struggle between life and death. Fervent were the outpourings of the clergyman's heart, and earnest were his solicitations at the footstool of Omnipotence for pardon and peace to the condemned.

Then came the parting with Susan, and oh it was a bitter and trying scene—the poor girl clung round his neck—as if her only refuge—her solitary tie to existence was about to be rent away for ever. Here the voice of kindness as well as expressions of remonstrance were utterly vain—she knew that her brother *was*—for she held him in her arms and hid her face upon his breast—she knew that he would soon cease *to be*, and she should be alone in the world. *Alone in the world?* Oh what do not these words imply. Jem tried to soothe her, but this severing of the heart-strings unmanned him—he was prepared to meet his fate as a brave man ought, but who can resist the appeals of Nature when claiming her parental influence over the children of her family. The interview was brief but full of agony, and Susan was carried fainting away.

All labor was suspended in the fleet, and the different crews were mustered in their best attire—the boats were manned and armed to attend execution, and as every circumstance of poor Jem's case was well known, there was not a single smiling face to be seen amongst the ten thousand who thronged the decks of the several

men-of-war. A universal gloom prevailed, and small detached groupes were seen conversing together in whispers. The fate of the unhappy man was considered as unjustly severe—the seamen generally, but particularly the veterans of the ocean, trusted that royal mercy would have been extended, and there was many an indignant spirit that looked upon the penalty as a retaliating vengeance for the conduct of the mutineers. Yet what could they do?—The articles of war were imperative—they could not deny the facts of desertion, though they hoped that the evidence of Admiral M—— would plead in the prisoner's favor. Yet they now had practical proofs of the utter fallacy of their expectations,—the platform was erected on the frigate's fore-castle—the yard rope was rove, and the signal for punishment was flying at the mast head; they felt it as an indignity offered to themselves, and if not an illegal act, at least it was an unjust disgrace upon the true blue of their cloth.

It was a resplendent morning, scarcely a cloud was to be seen on the face of the heavens, and only a light breeze ruffled the surface of the waters; the boats began to assemble round the frigate, and to take their appointed stations; the men were in their cleanest dresses, and the scarlet of the marines gave a finish to the martial spectacle. On South-sea beach, and at the castle—thousands were gathered together to witness the novel but melancholy event, and though no voice was heard from those afloat, yet the hum of the spectators on shore with occasional exclamations broke the utter stillness which would have otherwise prevailed.

Our own ship's company in the frigate had been mustered early, and every man fore-and-aft appeared—with

the exception of his black neckerchief—entirely in white. I could not have believed it possible that such light-hearted reckless fellows should be so suddenly transformed into beings whose grave and solemn deportment offered a most remarkable and striking contrast to their general habits. I have already said that Jem was universally esteemed amongst them, and never more so than at that period of separation, when all his good and honourable qualities were remembered, whilst those of an opposite description were totally forgotten. They were drawn up so as to command a full view of the execution, whilst a gang of the worst disposed men, selected from all the ships in the fleet, manned the whip * that was to run the condemned up to the yard arm.

As the moments rapidly hastened away, poor Jem listened with greater attention to the language of the clergyman, and though much of it was beyond his comprehension, yet he felt it was for his future happiness and welfare; whilst Dick Wills could not altogether reconcile it to his mind that there should be expressed more fear of the anger of the Deity than inculcating stern resistance to the arch enemy of mankind.

The entrance of the provost marshal announced that the awful moment had arrived, and Collins rising with alacrity showed himself ready for the summons. His arms were pinioned, and the procession being formed, the provost marshal took the lead, followed by Jem, who walked composedly, with the chaplain on one side

* The yard-rope is a single rope rove through a block at the foreyard arm, and when used for other purposes is called a whip, the end for hauling on is rove through another block attached to the deck, and this is manned by a certain number of hands generally selected for the purpose, who on a signal being given, walk away with it and sway the condemned aloft.

and Dick Wills on the other. Behind them came the Captain and first lieutenant. On emerging from the cabin the drums beat a ruffle, and the tolling of the bell commenced,—except those sounds a death-like stillness prevailed. The procession moved along the main deck to the fore ladder, where temporary steps had been arranged, and as Jem passed the line of his shipmates he saw nothing but commiserating looks and tearful eyes, and he heard the prayers of all who dared trust themselves to give utterance to the fervency of their swelling hearts. At last he appeared upon the platform erected over the bow, and every head of the ten thousand officers and seamen who beheld him was instantly uncovered.

Oh, it is a fearful thing in the midst of life, and youth, and health, to be suddenly cut off—to feel the warm sun shedding his genial influence on all around—to be in full possession of manly vigour and every essential necessary to enjoyment—to have the heart with its attachments clinging to existence, and yet to know that only a few minutes—a very few minutes intervene between the living man and the loathsome corpse. Jem knelt with the reverend divine and prayed—and thousands at the same instant of time joined in the holy exercise of silently breathing forth their entreaties to the throne of grace, commending the soul of the prisoner to the intercession of that redeeming love which, however human mercy may be denied, still holds out the gracious promise, “Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out.”

The prayer ceased, and Jem stood erect and firm—he shook hands with the chaplain—pressed Dick Wills to his heart, then the Captain placed himself in a conspicuous situation to read the sentence of the Court

Martial and the Death Warrant for execution. The silence grew more profound—the gunner blew his match to a bright heat, ready to fire the fatal blow gun that was to act as a signal to the fleet, as well as to the men who were standing prepared to walk away with the yard-rope-fall in their hands. The sentence of the Court was read amidst the most breathless attention,—the bell had ceased its tolling, and not an oar fell upon the waters to disturb the noiseless quiet, when so perfectly calm was every thing around that the voice of Captain —— was heard distinctly by every man in the numerous boats that surrounded the ship. He next unfolded another paper, and began to read.—But what is this that follows—the forecandle is in confusion—poor Jem falls prostrate on his face—a single shout—and then another—more voices unite in the acclamation, till it becomes a general cheer.—Is it mutiny?—the boats catch up the sound and prolong it.—Hark! it is rolling round the fleet, and both officers and men indulge in unrestrained acclaim, for it was no death warrant that was read—the words were heard amidst the cheers, and went from mouth to mouth, as they gladdened every heart—“A Free Pardon to James Collins.”

My readers may very naturally entertain a desire to know what became of Jem Collins.—He was discharged from the frigate into the *Cæsar*, carrying the flag of Rear Admiral Sir James Saumarez; and I had a lingering recollection that he performed some gallant action, the nature of which, however, I could not recal to memory. A few days back, on looking over a naval periodical, published more than thirty years ago, I accidentally stumbled on the following, which I give verbatim.

“Anecdote of the gallantry of a British Seaman.”

In the very spirited, though unsuccessful attack, on Admiral Linois' squadron, in the Bay of Algeiras, the 15th of July, 1801, the heavy fire the *Cæsar* had sustained had rendered every boat perfectly useless. Rear Admiral Sir J. Saumarez deeming it necessary to send some particular orders of great consequence (in the then state of the action, and the perilous situation of the *Hannibal* of seventy-four guns, Captain S. Ferris on shore, and very much exposed to a raking fire of shot and shells from Linois' squadron and the batteries at Algeiras, manned by French artillerymen, without her being able to bring a gun to bear) to the *Venerable* of seventy-four guns, Captain S. Hood, he went to the railing of the quarter deck and asked who could swim? A young seaman, named James Collins, of the Admiral's barge's crew, immediately ran up the ladder, and answered, he could very well. He immediately stripped, took the orders in his mouth went over the side, and actually swam to the *Venerable*, then fifty yards off, delivered the orders to Captain S. Hood, took the answer in his mouth, and accomplished his return to the *Cæsar* in about forty-nine minutes, to the astonishment of every person on board. The sea was literally splashed with shot and shells during the time Collins was swimming to and from the *Venerable*. His name is deserving a place in the annals of British seamen's daring intrepidity in the hour of danger."

I have no doubt that this is the same Jem Collins—but what became of him afterwards, I do not know—though it is by no means improbable that he obtained a warrant as gunner or boatswain of one of his Majesty's ships. As for Dick Wills, he spent his last days in Greenwich.

HARRY BARTLETT.

I recollect an incident that occurred in the *Barfleur* 98, when under the command of the late Sir Joseph Yorke. The people of the *Triumph* 74 had been longer together than any ship's company in the service—they were nearly the whole of them able seamen, and she was quite a favourite in the fleet. Sir Joseph Yorke had also commanded this ship before he had the *Barfleur*, and whether knowing the character of the old *Triumph*, and being desirous of getting some of them in his new command (the 98 having been re-commissioned,) or whether it was the opinion of the Admiralty that so many fine fellows were unnecessary in one ship, whilst the diffusion over many would be of the utmost advantage, perhaps the mutiny had some influence, but, whatever was the cause—the *Triumph* was paid off, and her crew by separate drafts of from twenty to a hundred were divided amongst the fleet—the *Barfleur* getting by far the largest portion. One of these latter was a quarter-master, named Bartlett—a Dane by birth, his native place being Copenhagen, but from early childhood he had served in the British navy.

Whilst lying at Spithead, Harry Bartlett received letters from Denmark stating that some property left by his family had fallen to him, and a handsome remittance had been forwarded to Portsmouth for present use. He obtained leave, went on shore, and returned flush with

money; and as good fortune seldom comes single-handed, he exhibited a letter from an old commander, informing him that application had been made to procure him a boatswain's warrant. Harry was very much esteemed by his old shipmates, and he was not slack in sharing out his good fortune amongst them, whilst the news of his expected appointment was industriously circulated amongst the officers, and he was warmly congratulated on his prospects of promotion. Several days passed away, and at length down came an order for Bartlett to go on shore and take up his warrant for a sloop of war that was then round at Plymouth, to which place he was to make all haste to join. The order was shown to the first lieutenant—Harry was granted liberty for twenty-four hours—at the expiration of which time, he not only returned on board with his warrant, but he had shifted his sailor's jacket and trowsers for a full suit of long togs, and appeared in boatswain's uniform.

Bartlett presented his warrant to the first lieutenant, who ordered Harry's discharge to be made out, and the officers generally expressed their gratification at his success. At this moment, Sir Joseph Yorke came out of his cabin, and the new-made boatswain promptly uncovered his head, whilst in such august presence.

"Well, my man," said Sir Joseph, in his usual deliberative manner, "and so it has pleased the powers aloft to reward your deserts, and you are now a warrant officer."

"Yes, yer honor," returned Harry, who had not been long enough in uniform to change his mode of address, "they've made me a boasun, yer honor."

"It affords me pleasure to hear it, my man," rejoined Sir Joseph; "I wish I could see the principle more *generally* carried out."

"Here is the warrant, Sir Joseph," said the first lieutenant, giving the usual salute. "I have ordered the clerk to make out his discharge."

Sir Joseph took the document, glanced over it, and then fixed his keen piercing, but restless eyes, upon Harry, who rather quailed before them, but that might have been caused by the relative position in which they stood. "I trust, my man, that you will do no discredit to your advancement. You have always done your duty to my satisfaction, and if I find your conduct to merit it, my exertions shall not be wanting to get you a higher rate."

"God bless yer honor," exclaimed Harry, whilst a deep flush passed over his already well-browned countenance, which did not escape the penetration of the Captain, who most likely attributed it to strong feelings of gratitude.

"Keep from strong drink, that is, to excess;" said Sir Joseph, "for drunkenness makes more unfortunate — than the devil himself. Have nothing to do with ugly or mis-shapen women, but see that they are such as will do credit to the service. If you should take a female mate, never allow her to handle your call, for that being, as it were, the badge of office, should be kept from every touch that may tend to lessen its importance. Be correct with your stores, and have no false expenditures to buy you rings or watches, or nick-nacks for women. Preserve subordination among the men, and make the women know their berths. Be respectful to your superiors according to their rank, and see that there's no chafes by the way. Never leave the performance of your duty to others, for, remember, should there be any neglect, you alone will be held re-

suggested itself. He had come out from his cabin, very little expecting to find Bartlett still on board: he demanded the order, compared it with others, and the forgery, though very cleverly done, was at once detected.

Harry wore his uniform coat till it was in rags, which was not long, as both himself and his messmates took every sly opportunity to diminish it,—but Sir Joseph was not so easily to be defeated. The tails were torn off, but he had them sewn on again with sailmakers' twine and every rent was duly patched in the same way. For some time he had only one tail left—the other having been blown overboard whilst on the foreyard furling the foresail—at last the other was absent without leave, and the coat was reduced to a jacket. Slight as this punishment may seem, it was far worse to Harry than flogging at the gangway, and no sooner had the Captain quitted the ship—than the tattered remnants were promptly interred over the bows, and nothing more was heard of this attempt at desertion. The value of the property at Copenhagen was transmitted to England, but after what had taken place he was not allowed to purchase his discharge, so that it was not long before it all went in grog, fiddles, and lasses.—Harry remained a quarter-master to the end of his days, and the last time I saw him was in one of the wards of Greenwich Hospital.

“Well Harry you have shipped your long togs again,” said I, after returning the veteran's friendly hail.

“Why aye, Sir, I have,” answered he with a grimace that fully evidenced unpleasant recollections of the past, and I forbore to urge him further on the subject, though presently afterwards he added, “I say, Muster ——— there warnt never no such thing as coming over ould

Joey--them hawk's eyes of his ud see into the heart of a mainmast."

This last interview was in 1824, and I think the old man's life was not prolonged many months from that time, and he was deposited in the Sailors' Rest at the Hospital.

One melancholy instance of desertion, if it may be so termed, is still fresh with all its unabated horrors in my mind. It took place in a seventy-four, whose Captain was nearly related to one of England's most celebrated bards, but whom either early education as a disciplinarian, or a perversion of nature's best gifts, had rendered a thorough tyrant. He was a remarkably handsome man, and in his manners amongst his equals in rank, the finished, polished gentleman; but on board his ship the slightest deviation from rigid discipline, or even an unpremeditated fault or error met with the severest punishment; so that at least two thirds of the people had smarted from the tails of the cat, and the rest felt that their utmost exertions were no security, and were constantly in fear that their turn would come before long.

The Captain of the main-top was a high-spirited determined man, whose constant activity and attention set apprehensions of punishment at defiance. He had been one of Nelson's bargemen in the *Agamemnon*, and the character he bore was unexceptionable, except that when unnecessarily reprov'd he was impatient of restraint and endeavoured to vindicate his fair fame with an eagerness that was construed into disrespect; yet, it was his pride to assert that in no instance of his life had he ever been brought to the gangway, or sustained a blow from an officer.

It happened one afternoon whilst the ——— was with the fleet in the Bay of Biscay, the Admiral made the signal for reefing topsails, and as this was a manoeuvre in which Captain ——— prided himself in the efficiency of his people he felt certain that his topsails would be the first reefed and hoisted with taut leeches.* The hands were turned up—the topmen crowded the lower rigging awaiting the word of command, and never had nature moulded a finer set of young and ardent fellows. “Away aloft,” shouted the Captain, and up they went, Tom Crampion taking the lead in the main rigging—he sprang on to the main-top-sail yard, and making a run out as if it had been a steady plank he reached the weather ear-ring, which was passed in less than half a minute, and made fast. “Lay in,” was shouted from the quarter-deck—in fifty-three seconds the yard was deserted, and the fore and mizen topsails were ready for hoisting, but the laniard of the starboard main top mast studding-sail boom had got jammed in the top mast rigging, and before Crampion could get to it with his knife, the other two topsails were swayed aloft, and the main-top-sail was yet down—the last in the fleet.

Nothing could exceed the rage of Captain C ——— “Send the Captain of the top of the starboard watch down here,” exclaimed he, “and by —— Sir, I’ll teach you to neglect your duty.”

Poor Tom looked over the top rail to the break of the poop where the Captain was standing, and touching his hat responded, “Indeed it was no fault of mine, Sir, I did my best.”

“Come down here directly, you mutinous rascal,”

* *LEECHES*—The ropes that enclose the sail on each side.

shouted the Captain furiously, "I'll teach you to answer me.—Rig the gratings at the gangway, and send the hands aft to punishment."

The quarter-masters promptly placed the gratings at the gangway, and the boatswain's mates having piped, exclaimed down the hatchways, "All hands to witness punishment ahoy," but still Tom remained immoveable in the top.

"Main-top there," once more shouted the Captain, whose rage had increased not to fury but to that horribly settled purpose, which contemplates some desperate deed.

"Aye, aye, Sir," responded Tom, looking over the top-rail with a heavy maul in his hand.

"Bear a-hand down on deck," exclaimed the Captain "I'll teach you to be disobedient and mutinous."

"Captain ——," uttered Crampion, in a mournful but resolute voice, "I have never flinched from my duty, Sir, the fault was not mine; I have never yet been touched by a cat, or even rope's ended, I cannot submit to a flogging, Sir; say that you'll spare me that, Sir, and I'll be on deck directly."

"The fellow presumes to offer conditions," muttered the Captain to himself, and then called aloud, "If you are not down in two minutes my man, I'll have you slung out of the top, and you shall have a dozen for every minute you have disobeyed orders."

"I can't bear it, Sir," remonstrated Tom, as he descended from the top to the main-yard with the top-maul † in his hand, "I'd sooner die than be flogged," and he walked deliberately out to the yard arm.

† TOP-MAUL—A heavy iron hammer both handle and head, used for various purposes aloft.

The spectacle at this moment was full of excitement—the ship was going about six knots through the water with the wind abaft the beam, so that the main-yard not being braced sharp up afforded an opportunity for every soul to see the poor fellow distinctly. The gangways, part of the quarter-deck, and the booms were crowded with seamen, in fact the whole ship's company—the officers in their cocked hats and side arms were on the quarter-deck—the Captain remained on the break of the poop, and it is hardly necessary to say, that almost every eye was directed at poor Tom. The gratings were lashed to the gangway, and the boatswain's mates stood ready with the cats.

"Away aloft there main-top men," exclaimed the Captain, "Seize that mutinous scoundrel and send him on deck."

The men were instantly in the rigging, but Tom's voice for a moment arrested their purpose, "Captain——," uttered he in a firm tone, "I have always done my duty like a man—you know it, Sir, the officers know it—only say you'll not flog me and I'll come down—if not—" and he looked into the deep blue sea.

"Bear a-hand up there topmen," shouted the Captain, "and take care the last man up doesn't get what he deserves."

Tom stood with one foot on the main-brace block, the other on the yard, as he passed the laniard of the top-maul twice round his neck. All saw the action, and every one knew the intent—there was a breathless suspense—even the Captain turned pale as the man shouted, "Are you detarmined to flog me, Sir?" No answer was returned. "Say the word, yer honor, and I'll be down in a moment."—Still no reply—the top-men were

on the bunt of the yard passing quickly out—in another minute he would have been seized, but waving his hat to the horror-struck crew, he shouted, “Good-bye shipmates,” flung his hat in amongst them, and the next instant sprang from the yard into the ocean. In a moment all was confusion—one seaman jumped after him under the hope of holding him up—the ship was rounded to—the boat lowered down, but poor Tom never rose again; he had dug his own grave which immediately closed over him, and thus one of the finest and smartest fellows I ever saw perished beneath the waves.

Does the reader wish for comment?—Let him search his own heart.

JACK TAYLOR.

CHAPTER I.

How quick time flies ; it is now some six and thirty years ago that I was walking from the metropolis down to my ship then fitting out at that place, which has been repeatedly spoken of as the dirtiest in her Majesty's dominions—I mean Deptford, when, on passing through Kent street leading from the borough, then an extremely crowded thoroughfare, and the most disgusting and disgraceful entrance to the finest city in the world, I was accosted by a poor emaciated being who implored me for the love of God to have pity, and render some assistance. The person thus addressing me appeared to be between thirty and forty years of age—dressed poorly, but very clean, having a sailor's jacket and waistcoat, with a tarpaulen hat and club tail above, but below, a woman's petticoat, of coarse warm materials, and shoes with buckles on them ; rather surprised at the apparel, and not knowing to which sex the individual belonged, I possibly should have passed on without replying to or further noticing the supplicant, but the pallid hue of the face, and the limping gait, together with a beseeching look that spoke direct to the heart, brought me up all standing.

“What is the matter with you ?” inquired I, not without some suspicion of deception, “You appear to be ill.”

"I am very weak, sir," returned the supplicant faintly, "I was only yesterday discharged from Guy's Hospital, and went to my old lodgings, where I slept last night, but having no money was turned out into the street this morning, and unless some kind-hearted soul will help me, I must perish."

"What makes you wear such a strange dress?" demanded I, surveying the lower habiliments.

"The fact is, sir," replied the person, "that the woman where I lodged pledged my trowsers before I turned out to pay herself an old score, and I borrowed the petticoats from an old friend who commiserated my condition. But it is not altogether out of place, for I have worn female attire occasionally."

This was certainly a strange admission—and I began to have a stronger notion of imposition, as it was doubtful whether the individual before me was of the masculine or the feminine gender—"And what were you in the Hospital for?" inquired I, desirous of gaining further information.

"For a grape shot in my leg which I got on the first of June," returned the poor creature with a languid smile, "it showed itself amongst the tendons, and after several years of suffering, it is only lately worked out, but the place has never healed."

"What ship were you in on the first of June?" asked I, now of course satisfied as to the sex of the soliciting party.

"In the Brunswick, with Captain Harvey," returned the other; "I was his chief cabin-boy. But I have had several other wounds which trouble me at times."

"Have you no provision—no pension?" inquired I, "surely the country would never let you want."

"His Majesty, God bless him, allows me £20 a year," replied my companion, "and I receive it quarterly—but it is not yet due, and the Almoner will not pay one sixpence except on the day and hour appointed,—and before the time comes I may perish from want."

"But have you no pension for your wounds and services?" demanded I, "or did you grease your heels and forfeit all?"

"I had no legal claim they told me," answered the other, "and I was a long time before I got either my pay or my prize money."

"Indeed! how was that?" questioned I. "But I see you require nourishment, and curiosity must not be gratified at the expense of humanity—there, take this and get food and lodgings; and if you have done nothing to be ashamed of, come down to me on board the —— frigate, lying off the king's yard, Deptford, and I will see amongst the officers if something more can be done for you.—There can be no fear of your being detained or pressed—your looks will be a safe protection."

"I do not fear it now, sir," returned the grateful individual eyeing the gift—no matter what it was—with pleasure, "and yet I bear a memorial of the Tower Hill gang here that I shall carry to my grave," the tarpaulen hat was removed, and a tremendous cicatrice appeared,—“it was done by a cutlass."

"Well then, if you like to come, ask for Mr. —— but stop I will give you my card and then you will remember the name," said I.

With many expressions of thanks the card was secured in the jacket pocket, and we parted. I do not know how it was, the pale face and not unhandsome features

of the poor sufferer greatly interested me ; and as I continued my walk I could not help condemning myself for having been so hasty in coming away with so slender a prospect of meeting again ; and frequently afterwards during the week the feelings of regret recurred, as no one of that description had inquired after me. At last I made up my mind that I had been duped, and thought no more of the matter.

Two years passed away, and circumstances not necessary to mention, again carried me to the metropolis ; and one day, when coming from the Admiralty in James's Park through the Horse Guards, I was accosted by a clean decent looking female—who, however, when she moved, seemed to be very awkward and uncomfortable in her clothes. "God Almighty send his blessing upon you, sir," said she—"you once did me an act of kindness that saved my life."

"Indeed !" responded I, "then I have no recollection of it—or of ever having seen you before."

"But you have seen me before, sir," returned she, "though I am not surprised that you should not remember me in this change of dress—I am Jack Taylor."

"Indeed !" exclaimed I, "then what makes you bend a suit of women's gear?—Jack Taylor ! I never heard the name before."

"Perhaps not, sir," returned she, "for it is like I did not mention it. But this, sir, I believe is your card," it was so, "and you gave it, about two years ago, with your bounty, to a poor distressed creature who had just come out of Guy's Hospital—"

"With a grape shot in the leg received on the first of June in the Brunswick," interrupted I, indignantly calling the occurrence to my mind. "That fellow was an impostor."

The female looked earnestly in my face and smiled, "There was no imposition, sir," said she, "I was the individual whom you so kindly relieved."

"You—you," muttered I, "and now in women's clothes—why, you rascal, it confirms my suspicion—you can be after no good, I will give you into the hands of the police."

"They know me too well to meddle with me, sir," answered she, "but you may learn from any of them that I am a woman."

"No doubt of it," responded I angrily, "if you are a female you must have been dead to shame long before by your rigging yourself out in the gear of a man."

"Do not think too hardly of me, sir," remonstrated she; "I owe you a debt of gratitude—and if my sad history can remove the unfavourable impressions which you appear to have, I shall feel still more grateful."

Now, unfortunately, I could never resist the prospect of listening to a "tough yarn"—it was the best and most influential bait that could be offered—besides, to speak the truth, the woman was good looking, and now did not appear so old as when I last parted with her in Kent-street; for though I soon recognized the features, yet they were plumper and more cheerful than before. "If what you told me be indeed true," argued I, "your history must be worth hearing.—A strange transformation, from cabin-boy to Captain Harvey to a woman in petticoats. Where do you live?"

It is useless making a long story in this matter—she lodged in very decent apartments near the Archbishop-palace, at Lambeth; and thither I accompanied her to listen to her eventful tale.

The room she occupied looked out upon the Thames

—every part of it was particularly clean, and not without an air of comfort—in fact, it strongly resembled in its furniture and general appearance the cabin of a ship; and numerous articles in miniature, connected with nautical matters, were conspicuous—there was a vessel partly rigged—a ship's buoy slung (rather a complicated piece of work)—a thum mat made of worsteds, with the union Jack in the middle, and another with the American flag. A few prints of naval battles, roughly framed, hung upon the walls; and one was the sinking of the Vengeur on the first of June from the tremendous fire of the Brunswick; there was also an etching of the monument erected in Westminster Abbey to the memory of Captains Harvey and Hutt who fell in the glorious victory; the floor was as white as the quarter deck of a man-of-war; a deal table, equally clean, occupied the centre; and round the walls were five or six chairs without backs; sea shells were ranged upon the mantel-piece; and before the grate was a beautiful root of coral. Here then I seated myself; and after some preliminary conversation, she began her story—of which I took notes, and made memorandums as she proceeded. We once more parted. I saw her several times afterwards, and questioned her upon various points, as I fully intended—I was fond of scribbling even then—to publish the whole, but somehow or other various impediments came in my way—my notes and memorandums got lost or mislaid, and my memory was not strong enough to bear the whole burthen. A few weeks since, when at a relation's in London, I was introduced to an old acquaintance in the shape of a sea chest that had been standing at least five and twenty years without ever having been opened. I enjoyed a grand overhaul, and in the half of a cut down fisher-

man's boot, I had been accustomed to wear when washing decks, I discovered, all mouldy and the writing scarcely legible, the documents that I had so long missed. The perusal brought the whole affair fresh to my memory—I passed half a night in looking them over—I walked over to Lambeth to refresh my vision—there stood, or rather tottered, the very building in which I had heard the tale which I shall now endeavour to lay before my readers under the title of

JACK TAYLOR.

Who is there that ever visited London and is yet unacquainted with Lincoln's Inn Fields—where there are no fields at all; but houses, and chambers, and myriads of lawyers? There is however a garden in the centre, where the stunted trees are nearly smoke-dried, and the flowers come forth like patients from a hospital—sickly and weak. And yet it is pleasant to feast the eyes on green leaves, though they may be scarcely within hail of each other; and it is gratifying to see the children playing on the grass, or enjoying themselves on the walks.

It was in one of the large houses in Lincoln's Inn Fields, that a woman, of lady-like and fascinating manners, resided; she was the mother of sixteen children, all illegitimate, and the paternity of her offspring was attributed to a nobleman—high at court, and a Colonel of Militia. In February, 1778, the subject of this memoir (Mary Anne) was born, and put to nurse in a village near Shrewsbury, where she continued for five years; but when only two years old her mother died in *child-birth of twins*. The next nine years were passed

at boarding school, under the protection of an elder and only surviving sister, who, however, died when Mary Anne was little more than fourteen, and a person of Newport, named Grainger, assumed the authority of guardian, and removed her from the school. With him she remained only a short time, when a lieutenant of an infantry regiment, named Taylor, was introduced at the house. He was a man of handsome exterior, and possessed a smooth tongue, and as Mary Anne was then young and pretty, she attracted his attention, and the poor girl felt pleased by the preference which he manifested for her. But the whole was conducted with the strictest decorum. Taylor never uttered a word that could offend delicacy—his manners were constantly kind, and his language instructive. Mary Anne had been well educated, and religious and moral principles were strongly inculcated on her mind. She would have shrunk with horror from any thing of an immoral tendency, and her heart was pure and innocent.

“Well, Grainger, what do you say to my proposal,” inquired Taylor of the *soi-disant*, as they sat together over a bottle of wine, “are you ready to close with my offers?”

“They are tempting, certainly,” returned the other, “but they will not answer my necessities—in short Mr. Taylor, I must have more or none.”

“You are very unconscionable,” said Taylor coolly, for he had a point to gain. “Here are your notes—debts of honour due to me for £340.—You cannot pay me one sixpence, and if I expose the fact you will be excluded from the firm—and must become a bankrupt. I will not only cancel your obligations, but also present you with another hundred pounds, provided you will

make all snug, and consign the girl to me.—Rest assured I shall take care of her—”

“Yes, as the wolf would take care of the lamb,” returned Grainger sneeringly, “but that is none of my business—come, come Taylor, say two hundred, and the thing shall be done in the most handsome and honourable way.”

“I might retort upon you now—with your *handsome* and *honourable*,” said Taylor, “but that it would be puerile. I cannot and will not give more than I have named—£450 for a girl—the sum is enormous. Besides, if I should press for payment of debt your circumstances would become known, others would come heavily upon you, and you would be ruined—the girl would then, in all probability, fall to me—”

“Not if I know anything of her disposition,” responded Grainger in the tone and manner of a man who fancies he possesses an advantage. “Mary Anne is not the girl to shrink from a protector because he may be in difficulty.”

“But I can expose this affair, and then let her judge of what sort of a *protector* she has,” answered Taylor, “an exposure might—”

“Blast all your designs at least,” interrupted Grainger hastily. “The mind of that girl would revolt from such intentions, and she would be for ever lost to you. As it is I am ready to give very plausible excuses to Mrs. Grainger for resigning her into your hands to take her to London. When you are there, you can do as you please, and depend upon it you will find her a pleasant companion in a campaign. Once mastered, she will adhere to you for ever.”

“Suppose Mrs. Grainger was to know of this—don’t

you think she would apprise Mary Anne of the circumstances and send her away?' observed Taylor, endeavouring to gain a point.

"She might, where you could never find her," answered the other. "My determination is fixed—pshaw, how many men have risked life itself for a female they were attached to or desired—and here you begrudge a couple of hundred pounds——"

"I beg your pardon, there are your notes for £350," urged Taylor with eagerness.

"Which at present are not worth one farthing," resumed Grainger. "This haggling and peddling is worse than useless—you are flush in cash and want the girl. I care nothing for the girl, though she is rarely a good girl; but I covet the money. There may be others more generous than you, and perhaps who will befriend her better."

"Taunts like those are not to be borne, Sir," uttered Taylor, angrily, "and I insist upon your not repeating them."

"Keep cool, keep cool, most valiant soldier," said Grainger, laughing. "Tut man we know each other, and the whole may be arranged amicably if you are so minded; but as I see you are growing warm, which will only tend to embarrass us still more, we had better separate till you have deliberated:" he then rose up (it was at Taylor's quarters) and quitted the room, nor did the lieutenant offer to prevent him, as he felt his hasty temper was but ill calculated to deal with a man who had perfect self-command.

Another conference was held,—Taylor's licentious desires got the better of his parsimony,—the two hundred pounds were paid, and Grainger, pretending to receive letters from the metropolis requiring Mary Anne's re-

sence there to obtain a legacy left by her noble father, as well as to visit a relative of his lordship's, the poor unsuspecting girl (in fact not a soul entertained suspicion, for Taylor's conduct openly was of an exemplary nature) took her departure from Newport with the lieutenant, who was *conveniently* going to London at the time, and was *entrusted* with the care of her.

Joyous was her spirit, and delighted was her heart, as on a lovely day in spring they travelled over the country, looking beautiful in its green freshness. It was the beginning of May, and the foliage was spreading itself abroad to clothe the trees—the grass was brightly verdant as its young shoots rose above the earth—all nature seemed to be rejoicing that the victory had been won over winter—Taylor, though a libertine in principle, was a well informed man, and he made the way more pleasant by his cheerful conversation, occasionally weaving in with the utmost art and yet with great caution, a mixture of sophisms which were calculated to undermine the bulwarks of virtue. Still he was extremely guarded in his conduct, and behaved most respectfully on all occasions.

They reached London. —

CHAPTER II.

A WONDERFUL place is the metropolis of England—here extremes are constantly meeting—utter destitution and *unbounded wealth*—starvation, with his gaunt looks and

hungry ravennings, and over-gorged plenty in his sleek and oily fatness—the most abandoned and depraved mingling with honour and integrity—the knave and the honest man—the wit and the fool—the plunderer and his victim—virtue and vice—oh, London is the spot where the leprosy of guilt leaves but few intervals of fair and healthy surface—where religion is made the stalking horse to hypocrisy—and where there is one law for the rich and another for the poor. Who that see the splendid carriages with their well dressed inmates rolling along the streets would suppose that misery was close at hand—or hearing the bells of the numerous churches tolling to public worship on a Sunday morning, would credit that the mass of human depravity far exceeds the collected amount of morality and piety united.

I have already said that it was the beginning of May when Lieutenant Taylor and Mary Anne Talbot arrived in the metropolis; the day had closed in, and it was deemed too late to seek for the relative under whose roof the young female expected to find protection and a home. Alas! she never found them, for constantly did Taylor frame excuses to keep her with him—the progress of seduction was slow, but sure; the poor girl became a victim, and with the ardency of her nature, yielded herself a devoted slave to the will and wishes of her betrayer, for she loved him with a strength of attachment that death alone could extinguish.

At first Taylor treated her with great kindness and attention, but as the novelty wore off he grew distant and reserved, and not unfrequently harsh and severe—his regard was based on mere sensual enjoyment, which he sought to gratify with fresh objects, and poor Mary Anne would probably have been cast abandoned on the

world's wide stage, but that she had rendered herself necessary to his comforts by her assiduity in anticipating his wants, and performing even menial offices in her desire to please him. Still she could not close her eyes to the fearful change in her situation, and during the long intervals of his absence she would sit and weep over her forlorn condition, recalling to remembrance the visions of past hours of happiness and peace. She had been virtuously educated, and therefore she felt her degradation more keenly. She would have perished rather than have acted treacherously or unfaithfully to the man she loved, and, consequently, his defaulture caused her the greater degree of pain. Her nature was not calculated for the indulgence of jealousy—she knew and felt that she was no longer loved, that others had succeeded her in the estimation of the lieutenant, and agony, irrepressible agony was her solitary portion. But she uttered no upbraidings—she neither murmured nor complained in his presence—in fact, she masked her face in smiles whilst he was by, under a hope that she might lure him back to her affections.

Such was the posture of affairs when Taylor received orders to join his regiment, accompanied by intelligence that it was under route for Portsmouth to embark for the West Indies. But he had latterly become an attendant at the gaming houses—his money was wholly expended—there were many debts of honour and dishonour, and he was destitute of the means of paying them: to decamp secretly was impossible, for he feared that application would be made at the war office, and the thing once known in the army he would no longer be enabled to retain that position, which notwithstanding his secret faults, he had so long maintained.

"Mary Anne, we must part," said he on announcing to her the communication he had received. "My actions can be no longer under my own control; I am but a subaltern—God help me—and my resources are entirely dissipated."

The poor girl, though sensible of the frail tenure by which they were held together, had never contemplated separation—she was prepared to share difficulty, distress, and danger, with him—nay, more, to encounter them all for his sake; but to part, to be divided by many dreary miles of ocean from the man to whom she had devoted her young heart, her entire affections—to be left desolate without a being in existence to whom she could cling—and hurled into the vortex of life whose whirlpools might at once engulf her in endless wretchedness; no friend, no relative to extend the hand to buoy her up from sinking; oh! the thoughts were dreadful as they passed with the rapidity of time's flight through her mind before she could reply, "You cannot mean it, Edward, that you must leave me—oh no, no!—say that you do not mean *that* or my heart will break," and covering her face with her hands, she bent down in agony as the tears came gushing through her fingers.

Taylor could not be unmoved at this unequivocal manifestation of affection, and conscience gave a retrospective glance, accusing him with the baseness of his conduct to the wretched girl before him. For a minute or two his better feelings prevailed over the vicious propensities which long habit had engendered, and something like remorse stung him to the quick. But this did not last long; his evil genius again prevailed as a glow of demoniac triumph lighted up his countenance at the thoughts of rendering her subservient to his future

particular; an interview was obtained with Lord — who supplied the necessary funds to enable them to quit the metropolis, and arrangements were promptly made for Taylor's departure.

"And why may I not go to Portsmouth with you, Edward?" inquired Mary Anne. "Everything is settled here, and I have money to purchase what few necessaries may be required for the voyage—"

"But not to pay for your passage, Mary Anne," interrupted he; "and your father will do no more for us. My cash is all exhausted, and there are yet many things that, as an officer, I cannot well do without—the money you have will about suffice—"

"Take it, Edward!—take it all!" exclaimed the devoted girl. "I care not for myself—it was only that I might not do discredit to you that I wasted one thought upon my own person. And yet, if I cannot pay the Captain for my passage, how then can I go with you?"

"There lies the difficulty, Mary Anne," responded the crafty Lieutenant, "and there is but one way to surmount it. The proposition I have to make is a humbling one, this I readily admit, and yet, if your attachment is of that durability which you state it to be, I think you will not hesitate to embrace it—"

"Name the conditions, Edward," uttered she with eagerness—"Yet stop one moment, and, oh! forgive me if I wrong you—I am not—I cannot be insensible to my degraded condition as an outcast from the virtuous portion of my sex! yet, Edward, I will not fall lower in my own estimation—" he was about to stop her—"nay, hear me out," implored she—"I have but little to say—but here, in the presence of my Maker," and she raised her hands and eyes to heaven, "I solemnly swear that no

inducement shall cause me to sink deeper into disgrace. —But you were not going to suggest anything dishonourable, Edward?”

Taylor, hardened as he was, felt stung by the implication; he could not blind his understanding to the fact that his companion was perfectly conversant with his disposition and character, and yet he wished to stand well in her estimation, however undeserved on his part. He had no real intention to leave Mary Anne behind him, she had rendered herself too essential to his personal convenience not to prove extremely serviceable to him; but he was also aware that so powerful was her affection that she would not hesitate complying with his proposals, though he wished to make it appear as a matter of favour to herself rather than proceeding from his own selfish motives. “You perhaps have had cause to suspect me,” said he, with firmness — “but this is no time for crimination. The object I have pondered in my mind was solely connected with your prospects of happiness — not mine. You have declared that it would be death to you to part from me —”

“And I spoke nothing but the truth, Edward!” asserted she, with more vehemence than usual.

“Well, it may be so,” responded he — “but the test is to come.” He stopped for a minute or two, and then proceeded. “I have already told you that the rules of the service will not sanction your accompanying me as a female — that is, in female attire, and known to be such: — you have set your mind upon being my companion, and, therefore, the only method that I can think of to accomplish it, is for you to change your dress for a jacket and trowsers, and, as my servant, you can not only journey with me to Portsmouth but also —”

"Go with you to the West Indies, Edward!" said Mary Anne, catching with quickness at the conclusion he was about to come to. "There's something repugnant to delicacy in the proposal—it will expose me—"

"To nothing injurious," remarked Taylor warmly, "for shall I not be there to protect you? However choose for yourself—there is no other alternative. I had hoped to gratify you, as some recompense for your attention to me in times past, by sanctioning your wish so fervidly expressed. But it adds another to the many instances of the little dependence there is to be placed in the avowals of women—"

"Nay, nay—do not slander the sex, Edward!" remonstrated she; "at least you shall find in me no cause for it. I did but express my repugnance—not to my going with you, for God knows my heart, it is my earnest desire to be ever near you—but to the change of dress. But I will conquer even that—and the dread of separation will render me too cautious to risk detection,"

"You are certainly a noble minded girl, and deserve a better fate," involuntarily exclaimed Taylor, as admiration of the devotedness of one so young came over him.

"Perhaps, when in another country, away from meretricious beauty and temptation, my heart may once more warm with affection toward you. I should be a brute not to feel grateful for the sacrifices you have made and are about to make, and gratitude, Mary Anne, the poets say, is nearly allied to love."

The poor girl sighed as remembrances of the past, when she was happy in his professed regard, came crowding upon her thoughts; but the prospect of regaining his esteem quickly banished unavailing regret, and she determined that nothing should be wanting on her *part to accomplish so desirable an end.*

It was the second day subsequent to the foregoing conversation, and amongst the travellers on the outside of a Portsmouth coach was an officer of the army, in an undress uniform, attended by a dapper little fellow in livery; his hat fiercely tipped over his right eye, and sporting a large military cockade. There was a glow of pleasure on the countenance of the latter, as the rapid progress of the vehicle and the constant change of scenery seemed to afford him gratification. But the nice observer, had he scanned closely, would have perceived that tears were occasionally gathering and ready to burst forth, and a sigh—a deep drawn sigh—would escape in defiance of every attempt at mirth. A more interesting looking lad could not well be seen, and every order of the officer was obeyed with the utmost alacrity; and, notwithstanding a little awkwardness, John acquitted himself with great credit. It was evident that the youth had been unaccustomed to the society of the rough and unpolished: he shrunk from the rude jokes of the honest tars, his fellow passengers, who saw in the fair young groom a fit subject on whom to exercise their nautical jests.

“Yo hoy, young fly-by-night,” exclaimed a naval lieutenant, who had for the first time mounted his white lapells, “and where are you bound to?”

“I am going to Portsmouth, sir,” answered John, with careless ease.

“Well, his honour knows that, my boy,” chimed in a veteran seaman, “I take it this here’s the Portsmouth craft, and being aboard of it, and under weigh with our nose downwards, why it stands in reason that, in due course, if we follows the figure head, as we shall bring up at Portsmouth—wind and weather permitting.”

“Your conclusions are not altogether correct, my

friend," observed a methodical looking elderly man, in very plain attire, and having the appearance of a tradesman; "although not very conversant with your sea terms, the coach, it is true, may reach Portsmouth, but this young man and his master might have remained in some intermediate place."

"Might," repeated the tar, "but they arnt going to bring up in the indy-middylate place, whatsomever latitude it may be in, ould genelman. Did'nt the youngster say he was bound to Portsmouth? and according to my notion o' things we're on the right tack—"

"And clean full," said the lieutenant, catching at the seaman's expression, "rattling along at eight knots an hour, and that's not bad going in such a hooker as this."

The army officer sat on the box by the side of the coachman, and his servant sat immediately behind, on the front of the coach, where the other three had also taken their seats, so that the conversation was kept up without difficulty, both the lieutenant and the seaman interlarding their expressions with numerous oaths—the latter almost unremittingly following his oath with "axing yer pardon."

"It's not quite so fast as the ould bantum cock, Muster Jennings," remarked the seaman, as he addressed the lieutenant; and then turning to the youth, he continued—"Aye, my boy, that was the clipper for a short run; many's the times I've had the weather wheel, and she going fifteen knots upon a taut bow-line; and as for sailing free, only give her half a fathom of the lee sheets, and all hands were obligated to shove their heads down the hatchway to draw breath."

"That's really wonderful," exclaimed the matter-of-fact tradesman, "and pray did ever any of you experi-

ence the ill effects arising from such quick sailing? it it must have made you very short-winded."

"Short-winded, eh,?" responded the seaman, "now that comes o' your long-shore know nothingness. What! short-winded, when we couldnt carry another yard o' cloth abroad than just a treble reefed main topsel and a fore-course! No, no, ould genelman, it blow'd enough to blow the devil's horns off; one of the jollies did but face it for a minute or two, and it blowed all his hair off of his head—pigtail and all. Another had the buttons of his jacket blowed right through him, and the officer of marines ownly opened his mouth to order 'em below, when slap went all his teeth down his throat. So much for being short-winded!"

"A gale of wind must be a terrific spectacle, if the effects of what you have been describing was a mere lreeze," said the young groom, apparently much affected with astonishment, and no small portion of fear; whilst the naval officer smiled, and the tradesman looked rather incredulous, but said nothing.

"Why, Lord love your heart, aye, its no plaything, take ould Jem Manning's words for it," responded the veteran, "mayhap if you're going in any of them there transports with your master, you'll not be many dog-watches afore you diskivers it. But there don't go for to be frightened, for notwithstanding you've hoisted an English dog-vane in your hat, I'm bless'd but you shows the lilies of France in your face."

"You are rather too hard upon the youth, my friend," said the tradesman complacently, "life has its roughs and its smooths."

"Has it, ould genelman," uttered the tar, with an arch look of humour, "then I'm blowed, if that ere's the case,

I shall have a jolly merry-making at last, seeing as I've had nothing but roughs as yet, and so in konsekence the smooths are all to come. But never mind young shiver-the-mizen," addressing the groom, "you may see that, except being someut the worse for rubs and chafes by the way, ould Jem has weathered it out pretty tolerably well, arter all; and what part of the world is your redgment bound to?"

"We are going to the West Indies," responded the youth, on whom the tar's exaggerations had made a deep impression.

"A jolly tuck out for the land-crabs, yer honor," said old Manning, addressing the naval officer, with a broad grin; "cocoa-nuts will be cheap at the pallsades."

"Come, come, my man," exclaimed the tradesman, "remember the tale of the boys and the frogs—what is fun to you may be death to others. This lad should be encouraged, not terrified; but I hope he has more sense and courage than to heed it."

"Well, well, I meant no harm," responded the tar. "There's my officer there as knows ould Jem wouldn't kick the starn of a cockroach to hurt him, much more a poor boy, who's like a young bear just caught, got all his sorrows to come."

"But I think you are rather mischievous in your jokes, my friend, though possibly not intentionally so," observed the tradesman.

"I take it all in good part, sir," said the youth, smiling, "I dare say he had no intention of alarming me."

"Your nerves must be very weak, in fact more like a great girl's, to mind what old Jem says," exclaimed the naval officer, whilst a crimson flush spread over the face of the groom; nor was the embarrassment diminished

when the lieutenant, on noticing it, added, "So ho—you can show British colours at last—you wouldn't do for a ship of war, my lad, unless to be stowed away amongst the doctors in the sick bay."

"Wherever I am, or may be, sir, I hope I shall do my duty as becomes me," rejoined the youth with spirit; "I shall serve my master faithfully, and where he leads I shall never be afraid to follow."

"Now, I'm really puzzled to tell, whether that is meant in compliment or in ridicule," said the naval officer, laughing.

"You probably would wish for satisfactory evidence," uttered the army officer from the coach box, "if such is your desire, you will not find me backward in affording it, when and where you please."

"You are rather smart upon me, sir," returned the navy blade, "I did but joke with your servant."

"Had you known your proper station, sir, you would have preserved your superior distance," answered the other: "but, perhaps, your commission is so very green that you cannot reconcile your mind to the weather side yet; and, therefore, consort, with inferiors, rather than with those of your own rank."

"This is impertinence that you shall answer for," said the blue-coated gentlemen, with an oath; "I never put up with the language of a blackguard."

"I do," returned he of the scarlet jacket, looking the navy blade full in the face, "it is only from those whose appearance denotes that they associate with gentlemen that I demand explanation or satisfaction. You will find in what character I estimate you, by my conduct hereafter."

"Really this is highly amusing," remarked the trades-

man, ironically, "and I dare say you think it extremely brave and characteristic to threaten the cutting of each other's throats—or stabbing—or pistol bullets—or something of a murderous nature. Now, gentlemen, could you see yourselves with my eyes, you would very soon form a totally different opinion. Your uniforms proclaim you to be in the service of your country, and if you must shed blood, let it be the blood of England's enemies, and not that of fellow subjects, engaged in the same cause. As for you, my friend," turning to the seaman, "for I must give you all a lesson—I say, as for you, why, as well as your officer, you have scarcely uttered ten words without accompanying them with an oath, though I must confess you seem more sensible of its impropriety than your superior, by asking pardon every time you swear. Do not feel hurt at what I say—why not, my man, get rid of the practice altogether?"

"Why, as for the matter of that, ould genelman," replied the seaman, somewhat abashed, "it shall never be said that I was angry with them as advised me for my good. And as for getting rid of the practice altogether, why then I'm blessed, but it puts my larning clean out of countenance to tell you."

"It has often surprised me," remonstrated the tradesman persuasively, "that men who are so constantly witnessing the wondrous power of the Creator on the mighty waters should not feel more reverence for his holy name. Can you account for this, my friend?"

The turn thus given to the conversation, stifled at once any further attempts at altercation between the two services which at that moment were anything but united: still angry and contemptuous glances passed, till eagerness to hear Jem Manning's answer subdued all feelings

of hostility. The tar turned his quid, looked first at the coachman's broad brimmed hat, next at the horses, and then wide away at a distant parish church. This might be for the purpose of collecting his thoughts, which, by the prospective round he took, seemed to be much scattered. At length he took a severe bite at his pigtail, and ejecting the juice from his mouth with the violence of a cataract, he replied—

“That 'ere as you've jist axed me about, is someut beyond my calkelation, ould genelman. I must own they pay out a good deal of slack in the swearing line, in our sarvice; but then it seems to come natral, to 'em like. As for the great name, it isn't often they profane it by taking it upon their onhowly tongues, though they do pretty often rap out an oath or two, by the way of what the larned calls a figure o' speech. But it's all habit, though mayhap a bad un; yet they gets used to it by practice, the same as handling the running gear, and larning where every rope leads. There's my last skipper, now, a genelman born, and the son of a Lord Chancellor, which I take to be someut in the lottery line, though they tells me it's next rating to an Archbishop—well, ould genelman, he swears as much in five minutes as ud last the whole of the main-top-men for a middle watch in squally weather.”

“Which proves” remarked the tradesman, “that swearing is not the offspring of ignorance, or proceeds from a want of education. I am aware that it has its origin in habit, but surely it may be corrected by constantly remembering that every oath, aye, and every idle word, is recorded against the utterer.”

“Why you dont never mean that ere, ould genelman—do you?” inquired the seaman, somewhat startled at the

announcement, "What all logged down again us? Well, then I'm blowed—"

"It is most true, my friend," replied the tradesman solemnly; "and I trust the conviction of it will deter you from swearing again—"

"If it shant then, I'm—there, I was going at it again; but I'm blessed if I dont take a severe turn with that ere as you've just said; and, mayhap, I may rub off the chalks in time," returned the seaman.

The subject thus commenced was carried on for a long time, till anger passed away from the minds of the two officers, and the conversation became general; so that by the time they reached Godalming, good humour was perfectly restored.

CHAPTER III.

THERE need be no attempt at mystery, for I make no doubt that in the persons of the army officer and his young groom, passengers by the Portsmouth coach, my readers have already discovered Lieutenant Taylor and Mary Anne Talbot. The poor girl, in the devotedness of her heart's first love, had consented to every proposition the Lieutenant made, and smartly equipped in livery, she made her first essay in menial servitude on the day they quitted the Metropolis. Mary Anne would have made no difficulty in obeying the commands of Taylor, for she had long been accustomed to attend to his wants, and affection prompted her in numerous instances to antici-

pate his wishes; but still they had never been so entirely divided from each other as etiquette between master and servant required.

Though the Lieutenant had destroyed her peace, abused her confidence, and treated her most ungenerously—sometimes cruelly, yet they had always sat at the same table and partook of the same meal. It was at Godalming, where the passengers stopped to dine, that the first sharp pang of humiliation was deeply felt,—the officer and his groom could not associate—it would have been considered as an insult to the other passengers to introduce a livery servant at the same board, and therefore the unhappy girl would have been compelled to seek the society of individuals of her own supposed class, but for an interference that she did not look for.

The lieutenants, both army and navy, and those who were eligible to parlour entertainment, at once sat down to an excellent repast, nor did Taylor seem to care what became of his juvenile domestic, who at first had attempted to enter the room, but a frown from him whose very look had become law, re-called her to a painful sense of her degradation, and she retired into the passage, where it is probable she would have remained without refreshment till the coach was ready to start again, but whilst distressing thoughts and reflections were agitating her mind, and tears were rushing from the heart's scalding fountain to the eyes, a rough hand was laid upon her shoulder, and she heard the voice of Jem Manning the seaman as he uttered, "What all becalmed, youngster? Did'nt you hear the pipe to grub? —" The tears started from the poor girl's eyes, and the tar saw them, "Avast, avast," continued he, "now lord

love your heart I didn't never mean to say a syllalbul as ud dispropagate your hameabilty! I thought you'd forgive me the bit of a breeze on the foksle of the coach, when the ould genelman read me a lesson or two out of the articles o' civility. Howsomever don't go for to be angry with ould Jem—don't—for — there I was going to pitch right bite aboard o' that onhowly practice o' swearing again, which, arter what the ould genelman has said oughtn't never to be repeated except in the West Ingees, where the heat o' climite requires somut o' the sort to keep you from bursting a blood vessel—and the mosquitoes——, well I, hope there's nobody aloft listening, but I'll tell you what it is youngster, them mosquitoes ud make a parson swear in sarmon time—why they'd have a slap at him right through the pulpit—they can shove their infarnal prombongscis through a top-boot and——avast, ould Jem. Well here I am spinning a gallows long yarn about them there mosquitoes and their bites, when all the time this youngster arnt never got a bite for hisself; and I say, my lad, as you don't seem to have had many banyan days—and your officer—I don't much like the looks on him, though he'll do for the land crabs—I'm saying your master, has left you, young as you are, to battle the watch for yourself.”—Mary Anne sighed heavily, but it passed unnoticed by the veteran. “I've been axing these lick platters for some grub, but they say they're too busy with my betters to attend to me. Now cheer up, young shiver-the-mizen, and I'm—that is blessed, if we do'nt puckalow somut just to keep us steady till we gets to Portsmouth.—Halloo, steward, can't we never have somut to man-handle, by way of clapping a prop under our kidnies? Is this here a Chris-

tening country where a poor devil can't get grub?" The waiters hurried by without offering any further notice than a grimace, "—your—that is—lord love all your hearts and be — to you, do you mean to victual us on the books to day?"

"I am not hungry," said Mary Anne, much struck with the humour of the seaman—a character she had hitherto known but little of, "and perhaps they have too much to do to attend upon us."

"That be—I mean bamfoozled," exclaimed the tar, checking himself "arnt we got teeth as well as the others—and isn't our money the king's coin as speaks all lan-gridges—and so says I missus," a dashing landlady approached and the voice and manner of the seaman were immediately changed, "why—well—there it's all right now—here's the wery himage o' Wenus, or mayhap it's Wenus herself, and when did the goddess o' beauty and love refuse a tuck-out to them as fights for her when she's safe in her dove's-nest hatching a whole shole of little cupids."

"What's the matter sailor—what's the matter?" inquired the landlady, not a little pleased at being compared to Venus, though she was certainly anything but entitled to the character. "I hope they have not neglected you—"

"Well, my dear lady, we wont go for to rip up past grievousness," said Jem, with a look as full of tenderness as a bottled-nosed shark gives to a double piece of pork; "but the fact is—oh, how beautiful you do look!—I'm saying the fact is, this here youngster and I are onfamishly hungry—the sarvants wouldn't even give us a plug of cheese and a bite of bisket—but 'never mind,' says I—didn't I youngster? 'never mind' says

I, 'there's one in this here house—mayhap she's like a cherub aloft at this presiche time, but the moment she comes on deck—for I've heard on her afore from some o' my messmates, that she's the beautifullest, generous-est, and kindest lady—and the moment she comes on deck, why poor Jack wont be backing and filling, and hanging a—hanging a—astarn in the passage—"

"No, certainly not, my brave old friend," said the lady, "you shall hang nothing in the passage. Bring the poor lad into the bar," and she walked before to show the way.

"Heave a-head, my tight-un," said the seaman, in an under-tone to the supposed lad, and at the same time giving a knowing wink with his eye; "that's jist the way with all the feminines—pitch 'em the gammon.—We're coming, maam—we're coming—aye, here we come, like seven bells half struck."

The land lady was a kind-hearted woman, and plentifully supplied their wants. Her first husband had been a tar, and she had always cherished a warm regard for the cloth. Poor Mary Anne, felt almost overwhelmed by her commiseration when she ascertained that the "pretty boy," as she called the disguised girl, was going out to the West Indies; the words of kindness and solicitude were something new to her; and now when she had tasted the early bitterness of her assumed station, and looking forward with an indefinable sensation of shrinking dread to the future, the language of even common humanity was precious to her ears.

Whether Taylor deemed it best to initiate his victim thus early in the trials which she would have to endure, or whether it was the utter heartlessness of his nature *that prompted* him to treat the poor girl with neglect, it

would be difficult to define ; certain it is that he gave himself but little trouble about her, merely inquiring, as soon as his own dinner was finished, if she had obtained any food. The guard's horn sounded, the passenger's took their places, and, as a full stomach generally produces good humour, the remainder of the journey to Portsmouth passed away pleasantly enough, and the two officers parted better friends than their first conversation threatened to leave them. As for Jem Manning, he had taken quite a fancy to the young groom, and Mary Anne could not help experiencing considerable distress when the worthy tar, with strong feeling and much kindness bade her farewell, exclaiming, "Keep your weather eye up, my boy, and look out for squalls ; many a dark and cloudy morning has turned out to be a sun-shiny day. Ownly mind your course and you'll get to windward of the land-crabs and come back again all alive and kicking. Good bye, my lad—I wish you were going aboard with me, she's a pleasant craft, and I'm thinking you'd find the sea sarvice better than swaddying along shore. Howsomever, I suppose it all comes natural, seeing as I take it every man fore-and-aft is born for his station—and so once more good bye."

Taylor ascertained that his regiment was quartered over at Gosport—the transports were lying in the harbour—indeed, some of the men had already embarked, and he therefore determined to remain for the night at Portsmouth. He ordered a private room at the inn ; and as his servant attended upon him, he was left alone with the poor girl.

"Well, Mary Anne," said he, "do you still retain the same determination to accompany me abroad ?"

"I own, Edward," replied she, "that I have experi-

enced much bitterness to-day, and yet I have tried to be cheerful."

"You would prefer remaining on shore then," replied he; "in fact, unless you have more control over yourself, your manners will betray you. But perhaps you are already weary of the undertaking, and wish to return."

"Return to whom, Edward?" responded Mary Anne, reproachfully. "Alas! you well know all places are now alike to me. A few kind words or even looks from you would recompense me for all I may suffer—they would so fill my heart with joy that I should think of nothing else. But, indeed, indeed, Edward, your harshness and neglect almost kill me."

"Cease this absurdity, Mary Anne," roughly answered the lieutenant; "the course you are pursuing was of your own choosing; and certainly it would be highly decorous and well calculated to preserve our secret were I seen fondling my groom. However, you have still an opportunity to recede and remain in England,"

"Oh, do not trifle thus with my feelings, Edward," uttered the poor girl; "you ought to know me better than to suppose that I would leave you; but there are times, Edward, when you might soften and relieve the unpleasantness of my task, and—"

"Well, well, say no more about it now," returned the lieutenant. "We shall join to-morrow; and really you make a smart lad, Mary Anne; rather too pale and interesting; and I make no doubt you will become quite a favourite; but you must be watchful, or your *incognito* will be discovered, and then there is no telling what may happen."

"I will do my best, Edward," replied she; "and if I have failed in anything to-day—remember I am young

as a learner in my new duties ; my errors are caused by want of practice, and not through inattention or indifference."

"I do firmly believe you," returned the lieutenant, with energy, the devotion of his victim overcoming even his selfish nature. "Yes, Mary Anne, I do indeed believe you. Persevere, then—act with integrity and honour, and brighter days may yet come."

"God bless you, Edward, for that comfort," responded Mary Anne, as her eyes filled with tears from the warm gush of tenderness his words had raised in her heart, and they parted for the night.

On the following morning, there was great bustle on the shore—orders had come down for the immediate embarkation of the troops—the convoy frigate at Spit-head war firing guns to hasten the transports, as the wind was fair and nearly all the ships were ready to sail. Taylor rose early, and with his young attendant was hurrying to the beach, when he was suddenly stopped by a rough-looking man who tapped him on the shoulder, and presenting a writ, he found himself arrested at the suit of the scoundrel Grainger, who was standing a short distance off watching the proceedings. The Lieutenant was well aware that the debt was fictitious, yet it would require time to prove it, and he had not one single moment to spare ; in fact Grainger had selected his period for caption exactly with this view, for he was by no means unmindful of the predicament in which Taylor would be placed by it, and his design was to extort money. The Lieutenant, well acquainted with the rascality of his quondam associate, saw through the trick in an instant, but there also came with the view a thorough conviction that Grainger's plans were

too deeply laid to be easily overthrown, and therefore without denying the debt he beckoned his brother in iniquity towards him.

"What would you with me," asked Grainger, in an under tone as he stood before him, and maliciously glared in his face.

"You know, Grainger, that I owe you nothing," returned the Lieutenant, "and wherefore this detention—"

"Oh, most certainly it is extremely inconvenient," said the wretch, laughing, "I never knew a debtor yet, that would own his debt. But come, sir, you must be well prepared with the *ready*. A gentleman who travels as you do and can afford to keep his groom—" he gave a knowing look at the poor girl, who though indignant at seeing her betrayer, was ready to sink upon the earth, through fear of detection, and the dread of being parted from the Lieutenant;—"I say," he repeated, "a gentleman that can afford to keep a groom in livery cannot want for cash.—Will you pay the amount owing to me with the costs—if not there is no alternative but a *forcible* detention;" and he laid considerable stress on the word "*forcible*."

"Bailiff," said Taylor, "I owe this villain nothing—I command you to release me, or take the consequences."

"All werry good and most properest to be said, sir," responded the bailiff, "there is never a cove as I catches but says the same. Howsomever, sir, here's my principal, sir," pointing to Grainger, "and if so be as he gives the word, up goes the trap and away you flies," at the same time the officer grasped his prisoner more tightly by the arm, and a second man drew up close in his rear, evidently with the design of preventing a retreat.

"Once more I tell you," said Taylor, "that you are

acting illegally.—It is that rascal who owes me money, and not I that owe it to him.”

“You must settle that ere atwixt you gemmen,” answered the bailiff, “all as I knows is, this here docky-ment is my authority,” showing the writ, “and as you don’t deny as you’re the man, vy I’ve made a lucky nab on it, and please the pigs I means to howld it fast. As for resistance vy it’s all gammon, you knows,” and the man laughed. “But let’s be moving—it arnt best to stand here—there’ll be a mob collecting directly.”

A few individuals had already been attracted to the spot by the occurrence, and Taylor, who saw that physical force was utterly useless in such an unequal contest was deciding to go with the man, but wished to make another trial upon Grainger’s honesty. That person however had removed to a short distance, and on approaching at the Lieutenant’s request, he plainly declared that nothing would satisfy him but money.

“I have none,” exclaimed Taylor passionately, “and if I had, I would sooner perish than you should touch one sixpence of it—Grainger you are a villain!”

“Hard names will not discharge the writ,” returned Grainger, “Perhaps your handsome young groom will become your bail,” and the fellow laughed in scorn.

A large crowd had assembled by this time, and as bailiffs and their followers seldom meet with *attachments* beyond their own; the people became rather clamorous. “My good folks,” said Taylor, “my regiment is now embarking, and yonder scoundrel,” pointing towards Grainger, who had again withdrawn, “has for the purpose of extorting money seized me on a false arrest.”

“Nay, nay, master, not a false arrest,” asserted the bailiff. “You let me alone for trapping the right bird

—There's the writ, and you're the man vot's named in it."

"I am not indebted to him one farthing," asseverated Taylor, "it is a fictitious debt, got up on purpose to detain me at this moment, when every instant is precious to me."

"Come, come, its of no manner o' use speechifying," said the bailiff, who, from menaces of the crowd, began to have apprehensions of a rescue. "Vill you have the goodness to move on, sir, and we can settle the balance ven you're in snugger quarters than these here."

"I will not move a step," said Taylor firmly, "Remember that I positively swear that the arrest is illegal, and should' any lives be lost, you will have to answer a charge of murder."

"I'll risk all that ere," said the bailiff angrily, "Come Joe, lay howld and bring him along."

Joe, the follower, promptly obeyed his superior, and the Lieutenant found himself fixed between two powerful men with stout bludgeons, who endeavoured to force him onwards. Poor Mary Anne had witnessed the whole of what had transpired in mute alarm; but when she saw them try to drag Taylor along, she bounded forward and threw herself before them, uttering entreaties that he might be released. This action of the supposed boy produced great excitement amongst the crowd, who seemed to be rallying their energies for mischief;—the bailiffs tried to urge the Lieutenant on, but it was with great difficulty they could restrain him, his struggles for freedom were so violent; and at last Granger himself came to render them assistance just at the time that the navy lieutenant attended by Jem Manning, and several seamen were passing down to their

boat, and were attracted to the spot by the noise. The recognition was instantaneous, and the naval officer, bursting through the crowd, exclaimed, "Halloo! what's broke adrift here! Avast, avast, what's the news!"

"Ay, you lubbers, tell us the amagraphy of the consarn," demanded old Jem, looking earnestly at the captors and their prisoner. "Well then I'm—that is blessed, your honour, if I don't think these here are land sharke, and—"

"In the king's name I command you to clear the way," shouted the bailiff, "stand by, Joe, to make a sweep afore you, if they vont expere for royal authority."

"Stop, stop!" said Taylor loudly, "I insist on speaking to my friend here," pointing as well as he was able to the navy lieutenant, "it will not detain you long."

There was something so reasonable in this, and the crowd were getting clamorous, that the bailiff thought it most advisable to comply. Taylor in as few words as possible related the circumstances connected with the disagreeable situation in which he was placed, and most solemnly assured his fellow passenger of the previous day, that the whole was a villainous attempt to plunder him through the agency of the law.

"And where is the fellow?" inquired the naval lieutenant. Taylor pointed him out as he stood listening to the earnest solicitations of Mary Anne. "Oh! ha," continued the navy man, and then whispered to Manning, who joined his shipmates, and in another minute Grainger was surrounded by them.

"How! what is the meaning of all this?" demanded he, "touch me at your peril, fellows!"

"Hark to him, Jem," said a young and athletic seaman, addressing old Manning, "its just as if he didn't

know you, as well as I do the figure head of the owld Revenge."

"Ay, ay, my boy," returned the veteran tar, hitching up his trowsers, "d'ye mind it arnt at all times convenient to cognize an owld shipmate. But I'm saying, Bob," turning to Grainger, "it arnt never o' no use to pitch your gammon in that ere onbecoming fashion—why messmate do you think that I have forgot the cut o' your jib?"

"I never saw you in my life before!" exclaimed Grainger with vehemence, "and I order you to make way in the king's name that I may pass."

"Well I'm blowed if that don't bang cock-fighting anyhow," returned the seaman, "what not know your owld shipmate, Jem Manning, when we sarved together in the Robust?"

"I never was in the Robust, I was never even at sea, you are mistaken, sailor," responded Grainger, "let me pass on," and he tried to put them aside.

"Avast! avast!" exclaimed Jem, "here comes my officer." Mr. Jennings approached. "Mayhap you don't never remember him neither, eh?"

"No, I certainly do not remember him," replied Grainger, "nor has he any knowledge of me."

"Why you ongrateful scamp you!" vociferated the old tar, "to go for to deny the officer as saved you from the gratings and seizings at the gangway, when you got toxicated and the skipper was going to give you three dozen,—I supposes you forgets that too!"

By this time a considerable portion of the crowd were attracted towards the disputants, and among them was Lieutenant Jennings. "Thése are your men, I presume, sir," said Grainger, bowing respectfully, "they


are certainly under great error in taking me for another person, as I make no doubt you will soon convince them, as they appeal to you to fix my indentity."

"Fix what? you desarting wagabone!' exclaimed old Jem, "Why do you think Muster Jennings don't never call to mind Bob Sansom as greased his heels from the ould Robust?"

The effect of this declaration was instantaneous on Grainger,—his face became perfectly livid in hue, his quick penetration at once detected the whole thing; his own trick by some means, to him wholly unaccountable, had recoiled upon himself, and if the man persisted in proclaiming him a deserter, he was well aware that no protestations on his part could clear him. All this passed through his mind in much less time than it had occupied to record it, and he saw at once that he was a prisoner without hope of escape, when the Lieutenant addressed him with,

"And Bob Sansom it is, sure enough,—seize him, men, as a deserter from his Majesty's service."

Grainger appealed to the crowd, which under other circumstances would probably have commiserated his apprehension, but they had seen him cruel and relentless, and English crowds are generally just in their decisions. The scoundrel was promptly secured and marched off to the boat, Mr. Jennings and old Jem remaining behind.

Whilst this by-play in the drama was going on, the bailiffs partially free from obstruction were endeavouring to force Taylor along, but as he was a strong man his resistance impeded their progress, and Mary Anne added her efforts to detain them, till the chief bailiff became exasperated and struck her to the ground. 

an instant, as if endued with super-human energies, Taylor freed himself from their grasp, but their bludgeons were raised, and would have fallen heavily upon his head, had not Jem Manning sprang forward, shouting, "Ware hawse," and striking out right and left, he sent the bailiffs flying amongst the crowd, some of whom knocked their hats over their eyes, and dealt out kicks and thumps in abundance, without scoring tally.

Jem raised the supposed lad in his arms, and bidding Taylor "up helm and carry on till all's blue," started off at a smart pace for the beach, where the man-of-war's boat was waiting for Mr. Jennings who immediately joined them. Manning supported his burthen in the stern sheets, the two officers jumped in, the pinnace shoved off, and when a few fathoms from the shore, Grainger was tossed overboard to find his way to the landing place in the best manner he was able.

CHAPTER IV.

On leaving the beach in the man-of-war's boat,—Grainger having with great difficulty regained *terra firma*, amid the jeers and shouts of the crowd,—Taylor was first made alive to the narrow escape he had had, and of the deep laid toils of him whom he had defeated. It was from the thoughts such an occurrence would naturally produce, even in a mind like his, that he was aroused by the shrill notes of the bugles of his regiment *sounding* the embarkation, and almost immediately

afterwards, the first boat, laden with his comrades, left the Gosport side of the harbour to join the transports prepared for their reception. Taylor's attendance on board was therefore instantly necessary—and making a sign to Mary Anne, who had now recovered from insensibility, as the boat rounded-to alongside a large transport, he bowed politely to Lieutenant Jennings, slipped something into old Jem's hand for the crew to drink his health, and then ascending the side of the vessel, he in another minute stood on her deck, and was followed by his faithful attendant. All around presented indications of bustle and activity—chests, bedding, and knapsacks were rapidly being bundled below as soon as they arrived on board; innumerable boats were passing to and from the shore, crowded with the soldiers, while the leave taking of many who were never to meet more, could be plainly distinguished, as the brave fellows left their native land for ever. Among those who were to be quartered on board the same vessel as Taylor, was a young private named Wilkins, who had shortly before joined, and in whom the Lieutenant took a particular interest from having known him when brighter days had dawned upon him. Having procured a boat to proceed to the Portsmouth side of the harbour, he despatched Wilkins in charge of her to bring his luggage from the inn where he had stopped the night before, (for not deeming that the embarkation would take place so early, he had altogether neglected to procure any assistance to convey it to the vessel,) with strict injunctions to avoid the streets through which Taylor had that morning proceeded with Mary Anne. He had no fear of meeting Grainger,—who had made the best escape he could, soaked to the skin,—or any of his brother rascals,

and after paying the bill left by Taylor, he removed the packages belonging to him, and stowing them in the boat, eventually arrived safely on board the transport. The bustle had then in some degree subsided, though a solitary boat still kept dropping in with the stragglers who had joined, and who excited much laughter from their comrades, none of whom would have them on board the different vessels, alleging they were too closely stowed already. Orders, were, however given, by the officers in command, for each vessel to receive its share, and this plan settled all disputes; the band stationed on board one of the largest transports, struck up "Rule Britannia" and in two hours afterwards, the whole convoy were in motion down Channel, with a fair breeze for the Western Indies.

On the larboard side of the vessel which contained Taylor, seemingly watching the land as it was gliding by, yet in reality with eyes fixed on vacancy, stood the stripling who had accompanied him on board, and who had declined joining the groups below, who were each making themselves as comfortable as they could; the merry laugh and cheering song had no charms for him—his pale, yet pensive countenance betokened that thoughts of no mean moment stirred his breast. Mary Anne (for we must continue so to call her) now felt more keenly the difficult situation in which she was placed—separated by the rules of the service almost entirely from Taylor, who was forced to mess with his brother officers, and keep himself in their company on account of the necessity of enforcing that discipline so necessary in the army—she felt alone in the world, and although she had more reason to fear him than any *others*, although he had so cruelly deceived her and

basely wronged her, yet did she cling to him with more than common fondness, as the only one to whom she could look to for protection. The thoughts of the happy years she had passed at the school where she was educated, where no pain or sorrow reached the heart, but all was joyousness and freedom, now came with double energy to her memory; the kindness of her sister, under whose tuition she had been, the many comforts, nay, luxuries she had been allowed, and merry companions whose society she had enjoyed, struck across her brain with maddening force: where were they now? Their spring of youth had grown into the summer of womanhood—their virtuous course of conduct had procured for them the love of men far above them in the ranks of life, nay some might have already tasted the bliss of matrimony, but she!—oh the thought was too much for human endurance—dressed in a costume never intended for her sex—exposed to the gaze of a band of soldiers, whose only pleasure was in the glass and jest, and who were induced by habit to despise those who were not the same as themselves—every moment on the watch lest some circumstance might betray her, and bring down disgrace on him who had procured her reception on board, as well as on herself, a path of wretchedness lay before her such as few had ever trod; it was true the chances were much against her being discovered, but whenever an eye more keen than usual was directed towards her, her own heart smote her, and she deemed she was lost, but the crimson blush that mantled to her cheek was almost instantly replaced by the same pale and sickly hue that had before predominated. The misery of her situation struck deep into the bosom of the unhappy girl; she had dared all for one who had

betrayed and slighted her ; she had not shrunk from a task few persons of an opposite sex and her own age would have undertaken, and for one who had openly declared she was a clog upon his promotion—and yet she did not hate him. The love of woman, that deep, undying love, which nothing short of death can quench, still warmed her heart towards him ; and had he ordered her to do the most menial office, cheerfully would she have performed it to have heard the sound of his voice. Amid recollections of the past and dark visions of the future did she pass the time occupied by the mid-day meal ; hunger and thirst were alike absorbed amid the confused fancies that crowded on her brain ; her parched lips trembled, her head swam round, and she would have sunk back upon the deck had not a smart tap upon the back partly aroused her, and in a few minutes restored her to recollection.

“Well, my cock-maggot,” exclaimed a stentorian voice, something like the roar of a speaking trumpet, “what can you see to look at so intently on land ?” Mary Anne could not answer. “What’s the name you’re rated in the ship’s book, I should like to know ?”

Troubled recollections crossed the mind of the girl as she gazed intently on the countenance of the honest serjeant, whose face bore evident marks of many years hard service. In the hurry and confusion of the embarkation she had forgotten to provide herself with that most necessary appendage, without which many of our heroes would be looked upon as little—a name ; she stared vacantly in the face of the soldier but answered not.

“What, no name, my lad ?” exclaimed he, with a laugh ; “what, had your owners so much trouble with *you that the giving you a name slipped their memory,*

or had they so many that they did not know which to choose, eh?"

"My name is Taylor," exclaimed Mary Anne, with great self-confidence; "I came on board with Lieutenant Taylor as his servant, and am named after him. I was so much astonished at the size of the vessel and the speed with which she travelled that I could not understand your question at first."

"And what's the handle to your name," said the serjeant, "your surname I mean?"

Mary Anne was assuming the same stupid look as before, but her self-possession returned, and running over a few names in her memory, she selected one, and hastily exclaimed, "John."

"And a very pretty name too," added the serjeant; "I have named my last baby the same name, and I hope he will live to be as fine a lad as you. Jack Taylor—a very pretty name upon my word. But go below and get your dinner; all the youngsters have finished and are ready for the officer's leavings when they come out." So saying, the honest fellow walked aft, and Mary Anne—or now, more properly speaking, Jack Taylor—glad to be relieved from his questionings, retired below to arrange the few articles she had placed in the Lieutenant's chest ere it was removed into his cabin, and to abstract her own from it. All feelings of hunger had left her—she thought only of the dreary abode to which she had been condemned—the society she should be compelled to endure. That night she slept not; the long watches were spent by her in the most abject wretchedness; she heard the Lieutenant till a late hour enjoying himself among his comrades—she could distinguish his merry laugh—he thought not of her then.

This, however, had an end, and soon deep silence reigned, broken only by the pacing of the seamen overhead, or striking of the bell at intervals. Thus passed her first night upon the waters.

The next day found her more resigned to her situation, and using more precaution to prevent a discovery. She saw Taylor several times during the day, but he took no more notice of her than an ordinary servant, and although she essayed once to speak to him, yet he turned away and would not be seen holding converse with her. At night she again approached him to obtain a few minutes conversation, but he flatly told her he would disclose her secret if she spoke to him again in the same strain during the passage. He worked upon her fears till she hardly conceived she had a chance of outliving the voyage; and instead of calming her griefs and soothing her troubled breast, he impressed her with feelings that made her still more miserable. Such was his conduct towards her—and *yet* she loved him still.

The open sea was gained—the convoy with as *yet* a prosperous voyage pursued their course; but at the end of about a week, a furious gale, which scattered the white foam and bowed the tall ship, was experienced; Mary Anne had become more used to the routine observed on board the vessel—she had recovered her spirits in an astonishing degree—for the weakest mind when it has been bowed down to the utmost, often recovers its wonted elasticity. The gale in the Bay of Biscay was, however, too appalling for her; she spent the night in prayer, expecting every minute to be engulfed in the raging waves; nor were her prayers unmingled with invocations for another—she earnestly implored the *forgiveness* and blessing of heaven on him who had so

cruelly deceived her. But she was spared ; the gale after blowing out its fury left the vessel comparatively unharmed ; not so with several others ; many lives were lost during the raging of the tempest, and one vessel foundered with all its freight of living souls, only three of whom were left to tell the tale. All damages were, however, repaired as speedily as possible ; the signal for close order was made, and the scattered ships pursued their way.

The remainder of the passage was most excellent, and with only one more death, (that of a child who had seen the light during the storm and died within the week ;) the regiment was disembarked at Barbadoes. Here Mary Anne was allowed to attend more upon Taylor, being herself well known to the regiment by the name of Jack, but he treated her with the utmost indignity, and forced her to perform the most menial acts. But they were not destined to remain long inactive, as the regiment was ordered to England and from thence to the continent, at the period when the Duke of York took command of the army in Flanders ; there she accompanied her deceiver in the capacity of a drummer, he having threatened her if she hesitated, that he would have her sent up the country as a slave. At the siege of Valenciennes, Taylor's regiment took an active part ; and here it was that Mary Anne was deprived of him whom she had loved so dearly, to whom she had so fondly clung as a last refuge, although he had paid that love with scorn and contumely.

Taylor's company had been ordered to attack a particular part of the town, and devotedly at his side pressed forward the stripling drummer ; it was near the end of the siege—it was indeed the moment of victory, but still

the besieged had determined to make one last attempt ere they capitulated. A fire, such as had not been expected, was opened upon the advancing party of which Taylor had the command, the captain having been killed, and almost with the first volley, Mary Anne received a musket ball in her body, which glancing between her breast and collar bone, struck one of her ribs. But still she pressed on—she durst not go to the rear, lest, being placed under the surgeon's care, her sex should be discovered; and amid the smoke, fire, shout and yell, she maintained her place by the side of Taylor. It was at the moment when the first file of the British had crossed the breach, that the besieged in their despair made their last desperate sally—all firing was suspended from the town as the brave band of Frenchmen sword-in-hand rushed forth to win or die. They were met by the bayonets of Taylor's heroic company—dashing on to their very points, the Frenchmen essayed to force them into confusion, but without effect—they remained as firm as adamant. Finding their attempt ineffectual, the trumpet sounded the retreat, and immediately, though not in very good order, the French retreated back into the town; one fierce volley rattled from the muskets of the Infantry party, and in the next minute they were hand to hand with their enemy in the death grapple. It was but the work of a moment for Taylor to single out the leader of the party—he was a tall, but at the same time, lean, lank, Frenchman, whose countenance betokened the hard fare he had endured during the siege; with the most perfect good humour he bowed to Taylor—but the latter on his part did not return the compliment, for seeing his advantage he determined to *settle the combat at once*; thrusting forward he aimed

the point of his weapon at the heart of the Frenchman, but his foot slipping over the body of a dead soldier on the ground, he fell all his length upon his back ; the light rapier of his foe was raised—a flush of anger suffused his pale yet noble countenance, but checking himself he buried its point in the earth, and motioned to Taylor to arise ; like a balked tiger, the Lieutenant resumed his footing, and waiting not for further parley he again rushed upon his foe—but the Frenchman was ready for him—the weapon was turned on one side, and with the utmost coolness the next instant the rapier entered his breast and protruded at his back ; yet he did not fall—faint and staggering he still stood to his opponent, for Taylor was indeed a brave fellow, although not a man of honour ; but his fierce impetuosity was no match for the cool and wary Frenchman—his impotent thrusts and blows, although they fell as hail, were turned like lightning, and he would again have received the rapier in his breast, had not a slight figure glided between the combatants, just at the moment the Frenchman had gained the advantage he waited for ; the next instant, the head of the latter was literally blown to atoms. The body of the Lieutenant, whom death had nearly stricken, reached the earth at the same moment, as that of the Frenchman fell all its length a hideous corpse.

Leaning over the young officer, was a youth in the habit of a drummer—made in nature's finest mould ; in one hand he grasped a trooper's pistol while with the other he essayed to stanch the wound in the breast, from which the life stream ebbed fast, Agony was depicted upon the countenance of the youth—it was pale as ashes. The dying officer rallied for a moment, and

looking up in his face, exclaimed: "And is it you, Mary Anne—could I have expected such kindness from you, whom I have so cruelly treated?"

"Edward, if you have heaven's forgiveness as freely as you have mine," exclaimed she, "you need fear nought; pray to God above that he may pardon you. May he do so, as I do here most freely."

"I thank you, Mary Anne," exclaimed the officer, in a still weaker tone of voice, but with the utmost tenderness, "may he also protect you when I am gone. I feel I have wronged you now, but you have forgiven me and I ask no more. Where is he with whom I so lately contended?"

"He lies a weltering corpse," exclaimed the girl, with the utmost fierceness, "within a yard of you; I have blown his brains out with this weapon. Would that I had been sooner." A shout arose on the breeze—a truly British cheer, and the next moment the flag of England waved from the battlements of Valenciennes. The dying man gave a faint cheer in reply, and essayed to raise himself up, but again fell back through weakness.

"Raise me up, Mary Anne," he hurriedly exclaimed, in his last breath, "raise me up." It was done. "Hurrah!" issued from his lips but more feebly, "Hurrah! death to the enemies of England. Oh that I could live to see it. But God's will be done." The next moment he lay a stiffening corpse in the arms of her who supported him.

It was at this moment that a troop of Austrian soldiers galloped by to take possession of the town, and seeing the youth down on the ground over a prostrate officer of the English army, one of the soldiers as he rode past made a cut at her with his sabre.—Crouching

as she was, the heavy weapon missed her head, but its point glancing down the small of her back, laid it open to the depth of an inch. Faint with her previous wound—agonized at the spectacle of him who was so dear to her—a lifeless corpse—her eyes grew dim, and she sank upon the body in a state of insensibility.

Night had gathered over the field of death, when the wounded girl arose from her stupor—the wind swept across the plain, moaning and sighing, as for the scene of desolation over which it was forced to pass; from the town the sounds of revelry could be distinguished, and innumerable lights flashing to and fro, denoted that the plunderers were at work on the bodies of the dead. Kissing the pale and clammy corpse of him whom she had so ardently loved, the wounded girl commenced her journey to the centre of the town, and now crawling, now staggering on, the best way she was able, she advanced for a considerable distance. Just at the time when she conceived she must give up her task, she heard the voice of the sergeant with whom she had become acquainted on board the vessel, and who was in Taylor's company, commanding a patrol of infantry to halt. Pressing forward, she attempted to reach them, but the command to march was given ere she could do so—she shouted with all her might, but the wind which blew very high carried her words far off—the measured tread of the retreating party was borne to her with fearful distinctness—hope, the last refuge of the sufferer, abandoned her, and again she sunk into unconsciousness.

A neat well furnished room was the place in which Mary Anne next opened her eyes, whilst over her bent a female dressed in widow's weeds, and with a face of

surpassing beauty. She was the widow of an officer in the French army, and had discovered Mary Anne lying outside her house, against which she had fallen ; mercy was the predominating feeling in her heart, and although in the uniform of those who had slain her best beloved, she had her conveyed in and her wounds attended to. But in doing so her sex was discovered, and then Madame Dessaix took her under her own especial care. At her house she remained nearly a month, while the balm of consolation was poured into her wounded spirit by the good lady ; but her wounds being now nearly healed, she determined to leave the house and make her escape to England. From the excellent education she had had, she understood French perfectly well, and had been able to converse most fluently with Madame Dessaix ; writing, therefore, a letter in French to her, thanking her for her kindness, and expressing her reason for leaving so hurriedly, she assumed the dress of a sailor which she had bought some time before in the town for her purpose, and departed on her way.

It cannot here be related how she proceeded on her journey, or the escapes she had during it, but let it suffice to say, by the aid of her knowledge of the French language she reached the town of Dunkirk. Enquiring at a house near the beach whether she could obtain a vessel, she was guided to a certain dwelling in the town, in which resided the owner of a cutter then lying out at sea. A berth as sailor was granted her, and again she embarked upon the fickle ocean.

The heroic girl conceived when she engaged with the French vessel that she was in the merchant service, but too late she found out that it was a privateer, and that

her crew were hostile to the English nation. The Frenchmen cruized about for a considerable time without success, and to the infinite joy of Mary Anne, one fine clear morning her captain found that he had run her in so near to the British fleet under Earl Howe, which he had not dreamt of meeting in the channel, that he had no possible chance of escape. A slight resistance was made, but Mary Anne refused to join in it against her countrymen ; the captain, whose name was Le Sage, beat her unmercifully to force her to do so, but she remained firm ; and the vessel having been taken, the whole of her crew were carried to the Queen Charlotte, before Lord Howe, to be examined. Being questioned by his Lordship as to the cause of serving on board an enemy's ship, she briefly told him, that being without friends in England, she had accompanied a gentleman to the Continent in the capacity of foot-boy, on whose death she had in the greatest distress reached Dunkirk in hopes of gaining a passage to her native country, but finding that impossible, she was constrained to enter into Le Sage's vessel, having experienced during the short stay she had made in the town no attention to her distress, chiefly, she imagined, from her being English. Her determination the moment she engaged with Captain Le Sage, she declared, was to desert on the first opportunity that offered to forward her passage to England ; but had she known that the intention of the captain was to act in an offensive manner against her countrymen, she assured his Lordship she would rather have perished than have been induced to set foot on board his vessel, having previous to his sailing taken him to be Commander of a Merchantman, and as such engaged with him. Fortunately for the stripling,

his Lordship did not make any very minute enquiries, and having obtained a favourable dismissal she left him. Soon afterwards she was sent on board the Brunswick, Captain Harvey, and had not been long there ere her cleanliness and good conduct, which differed so widely from other boys of the age she seemed, attracted the attention of her commander ; he questioned her as to her friends, and whether she had not run away from some school to try the sea. Mary Anne related such of her adventures as were consistent with the concealment of her sex ; after which Captain Harvey appointed her to the situation of cabin-boy to himself, in which capacity she served until they fell in with the enemy's fleet, and the celebrated battle of the 1st of June took place. In that spirited action, Mary Anne made herself particularly active, and just before the coming up of the Ramilies received a severe wound above the ankle of her left leg by a grape shot, which struck on the aftmost brace of the gun, and rebounding on the deck, lodged in her leg ; notwithstanding this, she attempted to rise several times, but without effect, and on the last effort part of the bone protruded through the skin, in such a manner as wholly to prevent her standing if she had been able to rise. To complete her misfortune, she received another wound by a musket ball, which went completely through her thigh, a little above the knee of the same leg. She lay in that crippled state till the engagement was over, when she was conveyed to the cockpit ; and there her wounds were carefully attended to, although the grape shot which had worked itself among the tendons of her leg could not be extracted. She continued in the Brunswick some time after its arrival at home to attend to the cabin of Captain Harvey, who had been

killed in the action, and went on shore weak but at the same time almost cured.

She had scarcely got far away from the beach, and had just time to thank God for her return to England, when the persecuted girl was seized by a press-gang, and although she made no resistance, she was wounded on the head by a cutlass, and conveyed on board the tender. She remained there for several days ere she would discover her sex ; but finding she could not obtain her release otherwise, she disclosed the secret. The utmost astonishment prevailed at the commencement, but it ended in her immediate release, and return to land, whence it was her good fortune never again to tempt the waters.

The narrative is nearly drawing to a close,—the yarn is spun out. It need only be added, that Mary Anne made numerous applications to the Navy Pay Office, Somerset House, for money due to her for her service on board the Brunswick Man-of-War, on the 1st of June and previous days ; but having been repeatedly disappointed, she made use of expressions one day which were considered indecorous, in consequence of which she was conveyed to Bow-street, where she underwent a long examination. She was at length dismissed ; and several gentlemen commiserating her sufferings, entered into a subscription for her, from which she obtained considerable relief. After a long period of time, however, she received a pension from the Navy Pay Office under the name of John Taylor, by which she had been entered in the ships' books she had sailed in. It was not till February, 1797, three years after she received the grape shot in her leg, that it was extracted, so firmly had it set in the tendons, although she was a long time

in hospitals. Her majesty, the wife of George III, afterwards allowed her a pension of £20 a year, but the heroic maiden—she who had gone through the utmost hardships and endured almost the greatest vicissitudes that ever woman was known to endure—died at length in very indigent circumstances. Over her gravestone might well be recorded, “Here lieth one who loved not wisely, but too well,”—truly so constant a woman deserved a better fate.

SKETCHES OF A SEA LIFE.

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OF A SEA LIFE,

BY

HENRY JALLAND,

NOTTINGHAM.



SKETCHES OF A SEA LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE BRIGANTINE.

THE period at which the opening scene of our tale commences was about the middle of August.....

The sun was slowly descending towards the western horizon, and the revelling waters of the broad Atlantic blushed most brilliantly beneath his reddening glare. The boisterous clamor of Æolus's rude voice for awhile had ceased, and all was hushed, save the gentle sighing of evening's softest zephyr which fanned the ocean's slightly agitated surface with its cooling and welcome breath. About the centre of this marine tableau two small white specks were visible.—

The only objects to be seen upon the wide expanse of dark blue waves, and still more extensive regions of firmament above, were the two small specks just alluded to. One, on a nearer view, was observed to be a most beautiful little vessel, gracefully haling to the breeze, and stealing almost imperceptibly on her course. The other was one of the largest kind of that immense species of sea fowl, called the Albatross. The saucy looking craft proved very deceptive with respect to her size, for at first sight she was taken for a light coasting cruiser, but on a closer survey was found to be the *Fanny* of

Buenos Ayres, a fine Bermuda-built Brigantine of nearly two hundred and fifty tons burthen. The while this perfect specimen of naval architecture spread her large white studding sails to the wind, so apparently endowed with life were her gambols, that in the distance a landsman might easily have mistaken her for a mate of the wild ocean bird that majestically soared along with her in its flight.

The Brigantine appeared to be in mourning, either for her captain, whom it was supposed she might have lost on the voyage, or otherwise for some one of her owners. Her masts, spars, booms, blocks, and dead eyes, as well as the inside of her bulwarks, nay every part about her, save the figure head, which represented the fine formed bust of a mature young female, and which was all gilt, were painted black. Her long low hull was of such unexceptionable symmetry in all its proportions, that she truly seemed to combine invincible strength with a swiftness perfectly incredible. The planks of which her deck was composed from stem to stern were of that hard cedar wood peculiar to the islands amongst which she was built, and the belaying pins and stanchions abaft the main-mast, of solid brass beautifully bright and untarnished. Her wheel was formed of knotted oak, and her capstan head of mahogany, the highly polished crown of which exhibited a specimen of the most exquisite workmanship, being divided into twelve elegantly carved panels, diverging in radii from the centre, and alternately composed of ebony, ivory, and satin wood, with the signs of the zodiac richly inlaid in mother-of-pearl represented upon each. In the centre was a small plate of pure silver, with the name of the *vessel* and the date of her build engraven thereon.

The Brigantine's masts and sweetly tapered spars,—her yards, booms, and crosstrees,—her standing, as well as running rigging,—the regularity of her large but exceedingly well formed sails,—the cleanly and unincumbered state of her decks,—the tautness of each rope, and the careful precision with which their falls were stowed away in neat Flemish coils,—the discipline of her crew, the order and strict attention to the duty of the ship which seemed fore and aft to prevail,—all bespoke that not only everything belonging to this compact and smart little craft was in unison with the beautiful model of her hull, but also that she was under the command of one who took a pride in the super-excellence of her surpassing qualities.

Below too, the greatest care and elegance of taste had been studied to blend ornament with utility. No expense had been spared on the part of the owners in the costly and extravagant manner in which her cabin was fitted up.—What, our readers will ask, could have been the occupation of this noble and apparently immaculate specimen of man's ingenuity? There she was seen upon the bright water, creeping along more like a sea-snake that had risen up from the fathomless depths of the ocean, than a fragile craft which the raging elements in their anger could so easily annihilate—And what, our readers will also ask, could have been the characters of her dauntless-looking crew?

The Brigantine mounted eight brass carronades, each of about six pound calibre. Upon the aftermost of these, with one hand holding on by the weather main-topmast-backstay, stood a man who appeared to be in the middle age of life—his eye was fixed upon the leach of the fore-top-sail, and the frequent orders which he gave to the

man at the wheel of—"Sted-dy, no higher, boy"—pronounced him to be the officer of the watch steering the vessel—which was sailing close hauled upon the star-board tack. It was a beautiful evening—and there being no appearance of any sudden change in the wind, the hands had been turned up to skylark.

THE CREW.

THE crew of the Brigantine were a hardy-looking set of men. The swarthy complexion of their sun-burnt and weather-beaten countenances told that they had long broiled under the heat of the tropical sun, and consequently had become thoroughly inured to the climate. They were a medley of all nations—from the wily and uncivilized African, to the enterprising and more intelligent European. In the fore part of the ship, close by the caboose, some standing, some kneeling, and others sitting upon the deck, were a group, with very interested looks, anxiously awaiting the result of a game at dice between two of their senior shipmates; while two others, a little separate from these, were engaged in deep silence over a pack of cards which they were playing upon a reversed bucket placed between them, in lieu of a better table. Upon the bow-sprit were seen three or four fishermen with their lines and hooks endeavouring to ensnare the unsuspecting bonetas that were frisking in the spray beneath the bows of the vessel.

In the weather waist, leaning with his back against the booms which were lashed amidships between the main and foremost, stood a regular man-of-war-built tar: his arms were folded upon his chest, and a short pipe was stuck in the corner of his good humoured mouth,

from which long whiffs of tobacco smoke occasionally escaped, and were borne away upon the wind in graceful and curling clouds to leeward of the vessel. The boatswain, for such was he whom we have just described, was superintending the occupation of two sailmakers who were seated upon their hams like tailors, stitching on the leach-rope of a new storm stay-sail. On the lee side of the booms, abreast of these, were four junior sailors, shuffling a reel to the tune of a one-eyed musician, who was scraping upon an old violin with but two playable strings remaining.

Aft all were four more actors upon the stage of real life, the anomaly of whose appearance enveloped them in as thick a veil of mystery as was the occupation of the beautiful and ensignless little craft to which they belonged.

The four actors just alluded to, were a fine athletic young man, a little gipsy-eyed girl, a negro woman, and a handsome Newfoundland Dog. The latter was one of the largest kind of that powerful and sagacious breed. Confidingly, and with a most friendly wag of his immense bushy tail, he approached the child, and appeared anxious to win her favour by thrusting his cold wet nose into her bosom; his tongue hung loosely from his mouth as though much heated with previous play. The girl seemed to be just entered upon the most volatile and romping period of childhood, namely, four years old. She could not be called beautiful or fair,—yet there was a something so winning in the sweet expression of her happy shining countenance,—a something so searching and intellectual in the roguish cast of her dark mellow eye,—a something so innocent in the goodnatured smile on her lip—that she certainly might be pronounced an

interesting, a most truly interesting child. The thick lips and flat nose of the negress told her to be one of Africa's dark daughters, perhaps a slave. However, be that as it may—to judge of her by the anxious and fond solicitude she evinced for the child's safety—the while that dear little creature and the dog were rolling upon the deck together—she might have been attached to the object of her care by the ties of blood, rather than by the mere duties of an attendant.

"Picaninny, picaninny—buccra picaninny,"—shouted the negress, as the dog and child were scampering for a twentieth time towards the fore part of the ship. "Come hidder—come hidder."

"Come, deary,"—added she, as the little girl and her playmate returned aft. "Come, deary, peepby—peepby—ab time, buccra picaninny, all same hoo—catchee, peepby."

"Not just yet, Rebecca dear,"—answered the other as she approached her nurse and took her hand with a most beseeching look. "A leetle more play before I go peepby, Rebecca—kind Rebecca—hark how poor Dolphin is whining because I have left him—see how he begs of you with his tail not to take me away yet. Oh yes, I must stay a leetle longer on deck to night, Rebecca dear—only a very little longer you know, and then I will go to my cot like a good girl."

"Hoo sabba picaninny lub—how many time Rebecca ab talkee—dat lillee gal all same hoo—sud go to peepby all same him sun—and rise all same him sun too—den will catchee beely good healt—lib long time—be old ooman all same Rebecca and ab too muchee hand—some facee."

"Well, Rebecca, I must go and kiss *him* first you

know, and if *he* says I may stay a little longer with poor Dolphin—you can go below and I will come presently.”

“Beely well deary—go and kiss him Skipper, and bid him good night—me will wait here, till him say hoo no must go yet.”

Off bounded the child and sprung upon the knee of the athletic young man who was seated upon the taff-rail. — With the most expert cunning she fondled about his neck until he acceded to her request and ordered her black attendant to go below till he sent for her. — There was the graceful child scrambling about his person with all the frivolity and happy indifference of her age—heedless of every indecorous attitude, and with a voice full of laughter thrilling melody—there she was striving with all her puerile might to put away the muscular arms of her companion that she might obtain hold of a splendid gilt tassel attached to the rich velvet cap which was carelessly stuck on the side of his head. — The much coveted treasure, after a most violent struggle, was at last obtained—then away scampered the little gipsy to her favourite—to the shaggy participator in all her romps.—The dog pounced upon the new plaything and darted off with it right to the head of the vessel—then returned again and challenged the child by his frolicksome and capering attitudes to follow him—she seized hold of that part of the cap which hung from his mouth, then a regular tugg was there for the mastery—then a mock growl and a laugh,—then another pull—at last down went the child, who still tenaciously keeping hold of the cap, was dragged along the deck by her powerful bushy rival, amidst the laughter of the sailors and the growling of the delighted animal in his pretended anger.

"Down, Dolphin, down, sir, I say," shouted the young man from abaft in a voice of such command, that convinced his hearers he was not one to be trifled with either by man or animal.—Then in a much milder tone he added, "Brunetta, dear, bring hither my cap, there's a good child."

The dog instantly obeyed the voice of the last speaker, the cap was restored to its original owner, and the two playmates were once more carelessly rolling in silence together upon the deck abaft all, between the wheel and the taffrail.

He with the velvet cap, advanced a few steps forwards and examined the vessel's course by the compass, then casting his eye aloft with a scrutinizing glance at the sails, seemed for a while to ruminate within himself.

"Call the watch, Cummings."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the boatswain.

The voice which gave the order seemed to act with a magic power upon the men.—The fiddler in a moment ceased to scrape upon his two-stringed instrument—the reelers knocked off dancing—the caulkers * were awoke, and the whole of the group by the caboose, as well as the fishermen and cardplayers, sprung upon their feet with extraordinary alacrity at the sound thereof.

THE SKIPPER.

THE commander of the Brigantine appeared to be about two and twenty years of age, truly graceful in form and exceedingly handsome, indeed he might have been designated a real sailor Adonis.—Both he and the child, as well as the vessel, wore emblems of mourning,—the

* A term applied to sailors sleeping upon deck on their watch.

dress of the latter being all black, while the former had a piece of black crape stitched round the lower part of his cap,—the jet black hair curling naturally upon his sunburnt and open brow, was but partially hid by the becoming little headpiece, whose tassel hanging gracefully on one side, occasionally lodged upon the brawny shoulder of the wearer. The expression of his countenance was benign in the extreme, yet at times a devil-may-care flash escaped from his large bold eye, that bespoke a spirit within not easily to be controlled, and stamped him as one who was not only born to command, but also to be most promptly obeyed. He wore a blue jacket of canton crape of the very finest quality, lined throughout with delicate buff silk, and most elegantly braided. A black silk handkerchief was tied loosely about his neck with the true nautical knot, and his shirt collar being quite open, exposed muscles whose symmetry the sculptor might have envied for a model. The small curling whiskers which adorned his otherwise feminine smooth cheeks, met in flourishing luxuriance beneath his chin. Round his waist he wore the folds of an ample silk sash, similar to those worn by the infantry officers of our army,—this being very tight, answered the double purpose of strengthening his wind, as well as a sort of brace to his trowsers, which were made of white duck of superior texture, fitting so close to the body that the muscular proportions of his fine formed limbs were quite visible to the eye, and spreading out at the foot to such an extravagant width, that the neat silver buckles which fastened his light thin shoes were completely hid as he stood.

Such was the costume and external appearance of the handsome young Skipper, but as he will form one of the

most prominent characters in some of the after scenes of our tale, we deem it requisite, ere we proceed, to give our readers a little idea of his inward man, that they may not be deceived by the particularly benign expression of his countenance, so as to form too high an opinion of the amiability of his disposition. They may judge of his heart's nature by the slight sketch we will now give of his demeanor towards those beings, whom, although of his own species, in consequence of their station in life being inferior to his, he seemed to think himself justified in treating as so many soulless creatures.

There he stood, with one leg a little in advance of the other, a hand upon each hip, his jacket thrown carelessly back, so as to allow his broad and well built chest to expand, and his eye gazing along the deck of the Brigantine.—There he stood in all the majesty of manhood, possessed of a vigorous constitution, and with the bloom of health and beauty on his cheek,—dauntless in look—ambitious and enterprising in spirit—with placidity on his brow, and the smile of good nature playing about his mouth.—There he stood, feared by all who were around him, yet beloved only by one, and that one a mere child in her infancy. At times his thoughts seemed to wander afar to other lands, and then a gloom was observed to steal upon his features, as the recollection of some dear and absent object glided across his imagination. He gazed with an admiring look at the prancing little vessel which so swiftly bore him on,—then again he smiled—sweet anticipation and hope of joyous bliss to come appeared for a moment to dwell within his more sunny mind, while pride, deep felt pride, was lurking there within,—and who, we ask, placed in such a situation, would not feel proud?—

Who that has stemm'd bold ocean's rolling tide,—
 Felt his light bark dance o'er her bosom wide,—
 Who, that has watch'd the dim-seen shores grow less
 Till distance sinks them into nothingness,—
 Who, that has heard the welcome sound—"All's Well!"
 Which fore and aft the watchful look-outs tell :
 Or list'ned to the merry topman's song,
 While sleeping sails propel his craft along :
 Or mark'd the lone gull soaring in her flight,
 To join the dense flock at a greater height :
 Or watch'd the crowd in circling eddies play
 Round a dead comrade shot upon her way—
 And there lies floating on the vessel's lee
 Food for some greedy monster of the sea,—
 Who, that has trod the deck with lordly air,—
 Monarch of all—where groups who know no care
 Abide his will, and dauntlessly obey
 His mandate, in the storm or more dread fray,—
 Or fear the frown—or gladden at the voice
 Whose look can quell—or sound can make rejoice :
 Who has not felt that secret glowing pride
 Which power alone can give, and courage hold,—
 While with the sway, which no one dare deride,
 Bold hearts are made more reckless—cowards bold ?

Within the last half hour the wind having freshened a little had become very variable, so much so that it was with the greatest difficulty the man at the wheel kept her full.—At length a sudden puff brought the craft right up the wind's eye, with her head sails shaking loosely from the yards. This circumstance awoke the young Skipper from his reverie.—His voice was again heard.—

✱ "Luff boy, luff—where are you steering the craft to—sted-dy!"

"Sted—dee," answered the helmsman.

"Farrard there—haul flat aft the jib sheet."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered a black fellow who had un-

*How could the luff boy be so
 sure in the wind's eye? 126*

belayed the rope in obedience to the Skipper's order, at the same time passing the fall aft to his shipmates who stood in a line along the deck ready to receive the same. —“Now, my souls, tail on here—bouse altogether, my souls, with a will—now lads give him a good un, with a will boys, with a will.”

The sailors bent their backs, and strained themselves apparently with all their might, without gaining an inch upon the sheet.

“Come Snowball,” said one of the aftermost, “give us a song, let's have one of your best ge-e-ho's, we shall be all hard up if you dont, we may bouse our livers out and be no forwarder if we have not a song to pull time with.”

In answer to this appeal the brawny African first seeing that all was clear at the sheave hole, took hold of the sheet nearest thereto, then opening his wide and muscular chest, that his lungs might have play, at the same time swinging his body with a sort of fore and aft motion to the tune, the others following the example—pealed forth in a clear strong and very musical voice—“Hau—ile, one—two—three,—bouse him taut.—That's him my souls, again so—Hau—ile, one—two—three,—aft with him!—Well behaved boys, once more, then belay—now lads altogether, quick this time—Haul—ho,—one, two, three, chock-a-block!”

Scarcely had the last syllable escaped the lips of the black, when the sheet carrying away close to the clue of the sail the whole line of men were thrown upon their backs, rolling one over the other upon deck, like so many bricks set upon end, the foremost being pushed down.—There they lay with their variously attired limbs sprawling in all directions, and forming a most

ludicrous scene. In consequence of this accident, the sail got adrift, and went flying to leeward. The Skipper's voice once more was heard in a tone of savage anger, as he sprung into the midst of the men. With the most brutish kicks and violent blows, accompanied with fiendish and dreadful oaths, he soon cleared for himself a passage through them to the head of the vessel.

"What are you about here, you set of lubberly rascals—how has this happened, you black-faced son of a nigger?"

"The sheet was stranded near to the clue of the sail, sir, and has carried away ——"

"I wish it had carried you to where your brother is : take hold of the downhaul, fellow, lay out there on the boom two of you and bend on the sheet a-fresh. Bear a hand, you set of lazy scoundrels, or I will break every bone in your skins."

As the Skipper uttered these words, he let go the jib haliards, then, passing aft, addressed himself to the middle-aged man whom we have before mentioned, standing upon the aftermost weather carronade :—

"Jump forward there, Mr. James, see that those lubberly rascals bend that jib-sheet clear of all, and let me know, sir, when it is ready for hoisting again."

Mr. James, the mate of the Fanny, between whom and the last speaker a certain coolness existed in consequence of frequent disputes between them on former occasions, but more particularly on account of one which transpired that morning with respect to the duties of their respective stations on board the Brigantine—at first treated the order of his superior with silent contempt. However wrong this conduct from a subaltern to his commander might be, it cannot altogether be

previous exercise they had taken, and she was very soon after sound asleep.

THE BOATSWAIN.

As soon as the Skipper disappeared off deck, the Boatswain knocked the ashes from his pipe, and placing the precious tube carefully in his hat, went aft and entered into conversation with the mate.

We have before observed that Cummings was a regular man-o-war looking sailor, and indeed he was.—There he stood with his arms a-kimbo, his legs spread open in form of the letter V reversed, for the purpose of keeping his body in the centre of gravity,—his little round hat placed knowingly on one side of his head, and with a swaggering smirk of self-complacency depicted upon his harmless and jocular countenance. Occasionally he rolled the quid of real nigger-head to the star-board side of his mouth, then stepping with a regular swinging movement to leeward, discharged the copious juice of the weed therefrom, at which time the immense thick cue horizontally poking out from beneath the brinks of his hat behind was plain to be seen. His jacket had certainly known better days, for it was sadly on the decline, with but a few stray buttons remaining thereon. There was a particular neatness about the tie of his black silk neckkerchief, and his trowsers, which were made of sail cloth, were surprisingly clean for a boatswain, indeed it must have been their first appearance since they were last scrubbed,—their fit as well as the make of his shoes was also very ship-shape and quite in character. Cummings was a short thick man, exceedingly jolly in form, not much unlike a fillet of

veal upon castors. Giving his trowsers a hitch up by the waistband, accompanied by a fling out of the left leg, this thorough-bred son of Neptune brought all his speechifying talents to bear for the purpose of spinning a bit of a yarn with his superior officer.

The beautiful little Brigantine continued dancing on her course in all the pride of perfection, a trim and seaworthy vessel. The wind had considerably increased, and now came upon the craft in a steady easterly stream.

"I'll tell you what I'm arter thinking, Mr. James," commenced the boatswain, after giving his trowsers another extraordinary hug, and the quid in his mouth a turn, "I dont believe that Skipper of ours takes the lads to be rale mortal individuals like himself."

"Heaven forbid that there should be any more on board the Fanny of the same nature as his, Cummings," answered the mate.

"Why, sir, I'm bless'd if he arnt kick'd poor Tom Sanders such a wipe across his mug that he has hactually knock'd adrift three of his front nippers, and the poor fellow has been bleeding ever since.—Is not that werry barbarous usage, sir, from one individual to another?—Those men, Mr. James, are nother niggers nor slaves to be used in that way, and I'm blest if ev'ry one on 'em don't know their duty aboard this ere craft a good deal better nor wot he knows his'n."

"I quite agree with you, Cummings—it is very barbarous usage, and I am exceedingly sorry that the willing lads who serve you and myself so cheerfully should be subject to such brutal treatment—but we cannot help ourselves—he is our skipper, and there is no redress to be had here. The men must bear the evil patiently

awhile, because if they show the least signs of rebellion, the same would no doubt be reported to certain authorities with considerable embellishments, very much to the poor fellows' disadvantage. It is very likely they would lose their wages for the trip altogether. In my opinion, between ourselves, Cummings, this is what the Captain is endeavouring to accomplish, for I understand he is principal owner of the *Fanny*, therefore it would be a great saving to him if he could get the passage worked without paying his men the wages due to them."

"I hope, sir, he has not so much dishonest wice in him as all that comes to nother."

"Well, I hope not also, old boy, but it certainly looks very suspicious. Depend upon it, I will not connive at any such unjust and nefarious plan;—if an honest man's word is to be taken, I will see that the crew are righted when we arrive in harbour. It is more in consideration of their interest than my own that I keep my temper, and put up with the insults which he is constantly heaping upon me. Were he my equal in years and experience, it might be better tolerated—but to be taunted and treated worse than a dog by one so much my junior, and so unqualified for his post, is almost more than my patience can bear."

"Then why do you bear it, sir?"

"Because, in some cases, I think it is policy to hold the candle to the—you know who, Cummings."

"Well, sir, I've no doubt you act for the best,—you've had more book larning nor me, and therefore can diskiver which is likely to be the safest course to steer. But I must say this, Mr. James, I do wish you were our skipper in place of the smart built young fellow that's just gone below—shiver my timbers if I don't, and that's as

true as my name's Joe Cummings, bo-sun of this ere saucy little Brigantine, the Fanny."

"Thank you, old fellow, for your good wishes. Now, Cummings, just step over to lee-ard, and see how the sun sets."

"Well, I'm blest if that wornt wot I come to talk to you about, sir, for, do ye see, it looked very comical a bit ago."

"It strikes me, from certain signs, and a few observations that I have made, that we shall have some roguish wind to night. You, as well as I, have sailed many years in these latitudes, and are consequently well accustomed to them, therefore just step over to lee-ard there, and tell me what you think of it."

The boatswain again hitched up his trowsers, turned his quid over, and then, at the mate's request, literally rolled his fat body to the lee side of the vessel. After gazing at the setting sun for a short while, he went to the head and took a survey to windward, then returned aft, and once more addressed the mate.

"I'll tell you what I'm arter thinking, Mr. James—"

"What, Cummings, what?"

"That we shall have a calm before long, and after that—you know what follows in these parts as well as I do. Had we not better have those royals and t'gallan-sels off on her, —I'm right down sartin sure, sir, that sweetly tapered spar at the fore will not stand the tail end o'this breeze which I can see yonder will soon be with us; the sun too looks unkimmun red and fiery, as though he meant to say there was something brewing that it would not do to play with. There will be an extra hand or two at the bellows there aloft to night, Mr. James, you may depend upon it—if there is not, sir, say that Joe

Cummings, bosun of this ere saucy little Brigantine, is no conjuror, and knows naught about it, that's all."

"I perfectly agree with you, old boy, for that was exactly my opinion of appearances before I asked you for yours—nevertheless two heads are better than one in these matters."

"Most certainly, sir, and in most matters too where ships and women are consarned."

"We'll hand the fore and main royals, haul in the stun'sels, and get the flying jib stowed away. Go forward, Cummings, and see to this being done immediately—bear-a-hand, old boy, bear-a-hand."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the boatswain, in a cheerful voice, as he sprung from the side of the mate to the fore part of the ship to see these orders executed.

It was well that Mr. James, had taken such prudent precaution in having the lesser sails furled. The tail end of the breeze, as the boatswain had prognosticated, was very strong, and there is no doubt but that it would have carried away the spars and smaller booms if the canvass had been allowed to remain upon them. Suddenly it ceased to be a breeze, and a dead calm was upon the ocean.

THE CALM.

A DEAD calm was upon the ocean.—A dismal and ominous croaking was heard to proceed from aloft: it was the voice of the Brigantine's consort vainly striving to settle her weary limbs upon the vane at the main-royal-mast head; where she at length gained a footing. A hollow rumbling sound, like the rushing of a great wind, was heard beneath: the sea, which was fast rising into

mountain waves without the slightest wind to cause the same, emitted a strong smell. In a very short while a vast and heavy swell had come thereon, and the fiery setting sun was surrounded with a great bur.

The cracking sails of the Brigantine flapped loosely against their masts, and the last propelling power of that impetus which had so late given the craft her way through the brine having ceased to exist, she was no longer answerable to her helm—but there she lay rolling and labouring in the trough of the sea as clumsy and laggard in her motions as she was before all sprightliness and full of graceful activity.

“I’ll tell you what I am arter thinking, sir,” commenced old Cummings again, addressing the officer of the watch, “that I’ve weathered many a severe sneezer in these ere tropical latitudes with much less warning aforehand nor wot this swell and that dense black cloud there, away to the westward of the craft, now give us.”

“I dont like the appearance of the weather at all, Cummings,” answered the mate ; “neither do I know from what quarter to expect the wind ; I don’t like the dark and menacing look of yon nor-west sky ; neither do I know how to interpret the dismal croaking of the bird aloft there.”

“I’ll tell you wot I’ve hard it said, sir, that them ere sort o’ birds generally give that kind of ominous notice on the approach of a hurricane, and settle awhile, as she has done, for the purpose of resting their wings before taking leave of a doomed vessel. I’m not skipper of this ere craft, Mr. James, if I was, I’d soon have a good deal more o’ this flapping canvass stripped off on her now there is no wind—it only makes the pretty creature strain herself the more as she rolls upon the swell of the sea, and is of no manner of use, as I can discover.”

"You are quite right there, Cummings—on the contrary, it might be of fatal consequence to all on board should we be suddenly taken aback by a nor-wester, so unprepared for its fury as we are at present. Ah! that vane seems steady now—wet your finger ends, old boy, and feel if there is a breath out there; the jib seems to draw a little, it may, perhaps, turn up a fine evening breeze after all our evil prognostications."

The boatswain did as he was desired; then, shaking his head with a most discouraging look, turned again towards the mate, and pointed to the nor-west sky. In that direction, at a great distance off, the raging of the storm was very discernible. The close reefed topsails of a three masted and apparently, large ship, hull down, were just visible above the verge of the eastern horizon.

"I'll tell you what, Mr. James,—you are at this time officer of the watch, and therefore have the whole charge of this vessel upon you—now, sir, do not think that I wish to dictate to you, or to palaver you over to my way of thinking about the matter, when I say that if I was in your situation just now, I would most sartainly have those t'gallan-sels handed, the topsuls close reefed, and the main course brailed up, until we see wot is the up-shot of yon dense black cloud. It appears to advance slowly now, but it may come on us by the run before long, with greater force than we can bargain for."

"But, Cummings, the skipper has frequently given orders for me not to shorten sail without first consulting him—which command I have already disobeyed by what I have now done in that respect."

"I'll tell you what I'm arter thinking, Mr. James, that smart built young skipper of ours in the cabin below there, is werry like a young bear with all his troubles to

come—and no more fit to command a beautiful little creature like this ere craft, the Fanny, than I, Joe Cummings, her bosun, am fit to be a king among the savages on them ere Winkamalee islands.”

“He may in time make a sailor, and a good one too, Cummings, for he wants neither courage nor decision of character; but, at present, he is sadly too impetuous and inexperienced to have a command. It cannot be expected that I, in my present capacity, as chief mate of this craft, with the perfect knowledge I have acquired to fulfil the duties of that post by having spent the greater part of my life at sea—it cannot be expected, I say, that I should consult one so much younger and so ignorant as he is in nautical learning as to how it is necessary for me to act under present circumstances—my spirit will not allow me to do it, and I cannot. Yet he is my captain,” added the mate, as if hesitating what steps to take.

“I’ll tell you what it is, Mr. James, those two sweetly tapered spars at the fore and main must go, I’m right down sartin sure that nothing can save ’em—unless, sir, you take my advice, and order the canvass to be stripped off on ’em.”

“I see they have already taken the precaution you recommend on board the ship away there to the eastward of us.”

“A smart skipper, her captain, I’ll be bound for him,” answered the boatswain, as he brought the telescope which Mr. James, had just put into his hand to bear upon the stranger; “he knows wot’s wot, and has taken care to have his ship all snug before the squall catches her. I see she is a much larger craft nor wot we are.”

“Here you boy, jump down into the cabin, inform

the captain that a strange sail has hove in sight to the eastward, and that she appears to be a large ship hull down."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the lad, as he dived below.

"Those sweetly tapered spars, Cummings, which you so much and justly admire, must and shall be saved if possible—I will once more venture upon my own responsibility to accomplish it."

"I'll go forrad, sir, and send some hands up aloft to furl the fore and main t'gallan-suls."

"And also to reef the top-sels," sung out the mate to the last speaker, as he was giving directions to the men.

"Ay, ay, sir—all ready with the top-sel and t'gallant haliards, sir."

"Let go—and haul down."

"Ho, ho—avast there I say—hold on, every thing forward," shouted Captain Peroni, who at that moment made his appearance upon deck, and countermanded the last order given by the mate. "Keep all taut fore and aft," added he, in such a deep-toned and powerful voice that it was heard in every part of the Brigantine. The young skipper and his mate were again confronted, when a controversy took place between those rivals who were so jealous of each other on account of the opinion which each entertained of the other's ability with respect to the knowledge they possessed of their profession.

From what has already been written, our readers will have observed that there was a good deal of cordiality between Mr. James and the boatswain of the Fanny. They had been shipmates together for a considerable time on board of another vessel, which came into harbour only a few days before the Fanny sailed. Their ship having to undergo certain repairs, they both engaged

with Captain Peroni for the trip which they were informed would only be about a six months' voyage. Although there was a mystery about the Brigantine's character which Mr. James could not fathom—on account of her captain always avoiding any conversation upon the subject—still there was something about the craft which very much took the fancy both of Cummings and himself; and as the skipper seemed to be such a liberal and open-hearted young man by the offers of pay which he promised them, provided the voyage was a prosperous one, they were induced, without the slightest hesitation, to accept his proposals, and engage themselves for the trip she was about to make. They were deceived, however, in the man, for before they had been at sea many days, he not only proved himself a Tartar, but also made it appear evident, by his general demeanour towards those under his command, that he was quite unqualified to have authority over them. Mr. James and his shipmate soon began to regret having shipped themselves on board the craft at all, particularly when they found that her captain was no seaman, although a fairish navigator.

At the time of which we write, almost every sea was so infested by the enemy's privateers cruising about in search of captures, that it did not at all surprise Mr. James to find the *Fanny* so well manned and equipped for defence against these marauders; but it did surprise him much to find so young a child taking the voyage in such perilous times. From a few slight hints which had occasionally dropped from Captain Peroni, the mate supposed the Brigantine to be in mourning for her late commander: but as an entire fresh crew had been shipped for the present voyage, there was no one on

board to corroborate this supposition. The little girl seemed to be quite used to a sea life, and apparently much attached to her protector,—but whether that person was her parent or not, all on board very much doubted, for there was not the slightest resemblance between the two either in features or disposition; yet she showed no recollection of kindness from any other parties than the skipper, the negress, and the Newfoundland dog; neither did she seem to feel affection for any other being until Mr. James came on board, to whom she became very soon strongly attached, so much so, that it was the first cause of disagreement between him and his captain.

The breach which was thus commenced between Captain Peroni and his mate daily grew wider, in consequence of the frequent disputes between the two as to the method of carrying on the duty of the ship; therefore Mr. James gave up all attempt to gain any further intelligence from him respecting the Brigantine's occupation before he joined her. And thus matters stood when we first introduced the parties to our readers. We fear their patience has been put to the test, but we trust to compensate for having tried it so much by the interesting matter we have to relate in the succeeding chapters of our tale.

CHAPTER II.

THE MATE.

MR. JAMES, the mate of the Brigantine, although, as we have before observed, about the middle age of life,

appeared upon a more scrutinous survey, to be a much older man. Doubtless he had gone through his share of the trials and vicissitudes ever attendant upon us during our mortal pilgrimage. His face, besides being indented with the small pox, was furrowed with wrinkles which an age of hard servitude alone could have given; and his hair, which was very thin and silky, was not grey, but perfectly white as the driven snow. He had on his head an exceedingly wide brimmed Manilla hat; while in other respects, his dress very much resembled that which is generally worn by the West Indian planters, consisting of white jean jacket and waistcoat, a blue small chequered shirt, black silk handkerchief and light blue camblet trowsers—made much after the same style as the white ones which were worn by the being who confronted him—a pair of light long-quartered shoes completing his costume.

There stood the two rivals, as different in the external appearance of their persons as they were in the disposition of their hearts. The one was all arrogance, and filled up with self-conceit: while the other was a composition of mildness and humility. The expression of their countenances was equally deceptive; for the one was all beauty and good nature, while the other was particularly plain and forbidding in its aspect. They were both of about the same height, but the form of the younger was grace itself, and full of symmetry in its proportions; while that of the mate was awkward, rather lean, and of exceeding great strength, at least the sinews and apparently large bones of the individual, bespoke him possessed of gymnastic power. For a second, the two stedfastly gazed in each other's face; the one with a look of smothered passion, the other with a calm and

provoking stare of indifference. The lip of the former was seen to quiver with contending emotions, as he addressed his subaltern :—

“Mr. James! whatever can you be thinking of, in giving orders to shorten sail?—Why, sir, there is not a yard of canvass, fore and aft the Brigantine, that has drawn a breath of air this last half hour.”

“We know not, sir,” answered the mate, respectfully, “but that every stitch may draw too much, ere that same space of time be again expired. But as you have been pleased to countermand my orders, Captain Peroni, you had better take charge of the deck yourself.”

“Have you forgot the orders I gave this very morning, about shortening sail?”

“I have not, sir; but if I may be allowed to give an opinion, there is something brewing in the nor-west sky yonder, that we ought to be prepared for, without any further parley. But act as *you* think proper, Captain Peroni, I care not, for myself, how it is, it is the weal of others that I have at heart. I have attempted to do my duty, sir, and you have opposed me, therefore I give up my charge, that you may do as you like, without any one to interfere with or dictate to you.”

“I know, Mr. James, without you telling me, that I can act as I think proper on board this craft. I am Captain of the Fanny, sir, and will be obeyed as such.”

“I am not likely to forget that, Captain Peroni, which you so frequently remind me of, both by your words and actions; although I must say, that, at times, both are very derogatory to the supremacy of your office.”

“No one shall shorten sail, sir, without first consulting me. You have disobeyed my positive orders upon that head, Mr. James.”

"I have, sir; but as you were not upon deck, I did not think it necessary to obey that command in this instance, for I am of opinion, Captain Peroni, that ——"

"When your opinion is wanted by me, Mr. James, I will ask you for it; until then, I wish you to keep it to yourself."

"I tell you what, Captain Peroni," resumed the mate, quite heedless of the last injunction of the haughty young skipper, who had turned his back on him, "if you will not listen to rational advice willingly, you must submit to have the opinion of a man, older and more experienced than yourself, forced upon you rudely. I do not hesitate to say in your presence, sir, that unless you strike those gallan masts, and close reef the top-sels, you will be guilty of a sad dereliction of duty in your present capacity, as officer, in charge of the deck. Moreover than that, sir, you will be running a great risk, of not only losing your vessel, but also of sacrificing the lives of many valuable seamen. Do you not see, sir, that the captain who commands yon ship there astern of us, has already taken the precaution I recommend, and she is a much larger craft than the one you command?"

"What is that to me, Mr. James, I will not imitate any man in the management of my vessel, unless I see absolute necessity for so doing."

"You will, perhaps, see the necessity of it when it is too late, sir: if you will only listen to me a few minutes, I will soon convince you how ——"

"I will listen to nothing you have to say upon the subject, Mr. James, therefore keep your advice and opinions to yourself, for I wish to hear no more of them."

Having said these words, the obstinate young man

abruptly turned away from his second, and walked towards the head of the vessel. The Brigantine was pitching most violently ; and the heavy blows which she occasionally received, from the waves breaking their force against her sides, and partly on her deck, made her tremble in every plank. Such was the fearful magnitude to which the sea, in a short while, had increased. The bird overhead gave another most dismal and ominous croak of alarm, then again flapped its immense long pinions and was still, seeming for awhile in a deep slumber.

Perhaps some of our readers may not be aware what are the peculiar characteristics of the sailor. For the benefit of those who are not, we will just mention a few of his most predominant qualities.

The real son of Neptune—be his station in life high or low, either upon the quarter deck or fore-castle—is a sort of amphibious animal, much more at home upon the ocean than on terra-firma. He is ever open-hearted ; kind to a brother in distress, generous in the extreme, and as brave as a lion ; possessing all the noble qualities of the latter animal, but void of his brutish ones. He is always a greater enemy to himself than to those who may happen to be his associates ; and, consequently, oftentimes the victim of imposition. His purse is not his own : it is anybody's, who likes to partake of its contents. His arm is ever ready to assist the aged and infirm ; to heap vengeance on the enemies of his country ; or, to clasp, with a sincere and tender fondness, the girl whom he loves. Easily conquered by the fair, but dauntless and untameable when contending with his own sex. Ever most gallant *and courageous* in defence of the former, but a bitter

enemy to their vile seducers. Ever ready, with open hand, to assist a friend, or boldly to face a foe, provided the latter be in mortal garb: but, a mere child in valour, nay, even a rank coward, where anything relating to *supernatural* is supposed to exist. Jack is good natured and easy of belief: he goes down to the sea, and there becomes acquainted with the wonders of the deep; he communes with his own thoughts, and reflects upon that omnipotent Being, who first caused their creation. He hears, with humbled spirit, the sound of His almighty voice; and bends, with reverential knee, to the vivid flash of His all searching fire, owning, in silent but sacred aspirations, the frailty of his nature, and the impotence of vain mortality. He is really religious at heart; indeed, very much more so than many of his brethren on shore, who make a greater profession than he does. Add to these qualities a natural propensity for eagerly swallowing the marvellous; a mind flooded with superstition, and a body ever subservient thereto—then you will have the true character of a sailor. We do not mean to assert that all beings of this class are alike—there are exceptions to every rule; but although those exceptions may differ in the more noble traits of character, they all, we believe, are subject more or less to the latter predominant failing—they all are superstitious, and, in some instances, ridiculously so, as the following sketch will illustrate.

Again the albatross, perched upon the vane, at the main-royal-mast head, awoke from its partial slumber, and flapped its long stretched out wings, as if to prove their efficiency, ere again trusting itself to their strength; and then, as it were, satisfied with the trial, once more appeared tranquil, and at rest. The young skipper re-

turned aft, and took his station by the helmsman. Mr. James, the mate, ventured to address him :—

“Do you see that bird, Captain Peroni, at the main-royal-mast head?”

“I do, Mr. James—what of it?” asked the skipper coolly.

“That bird is the large albatross; or frigate bird, as sailors sometimes call it.”

“I know that, Mr. James, and no thanks to your erudition for my knowledge.”

“Well, sir, it has accompanied us for the last three days, during which time, I have most attentively observed its career. Never, until this evening, sir, has it attempted to settle on the Brigantine; at length it has done so, and its late ominous croaking seems to me given as a warning to prepare for what will speedily overtake us. Look, Captain, around you, do you not perceive how fearfully the swell has increased since we lost the breeze, and what an immense surge we have to contend with; it is even beating and lashing against the vessel's sides like the tail of a ferocious tiger in its anger—and still you heed it not. Look out yonder, sir, at the black and menacing aspect of the nor-west sky: see there the dense black mist which is big with the coming hurricane, how much nearer it has approached us. Mark, sir, the creature aloft there, which although by nature so swift and powerful in all ordinary winds, yet so altogether helpless in the storm, is already preparing to take its flight. In a few more seconds she will soar away into the regions of air, far, far above the fury of the coming tempest, that she may there remain in security until its violence is over. Captain Peroni!” continued the mate, lowering the tone of his voice to a

very low whisper.

solemn and persuasive sound, "for your own sake—for the preservation of their lives, who obey you as the commander of this beautiful vessel—for the sake of the Brigantine herself—and lastly for the sake of that innocent and darling child, whom we have with us—do take the precaution I recommend: for God's sake I most earnestly beseech of you to allow me to prepare your bark for that which she will soon have most fearfully to contend with."

"Mr. James," answered the obstinate and self-conceited young skipper, to his more prudent adviser, "when I want your experience in the management of my ship, I will, as I have before said, ask you for it; till then, keep it to yourself:" then, addressing the man who was steering, as he took the spokes of the wheel into his own hand—"Here, fellow, jump down into the cabin, and bring me up my rifle."

"Well, Captain Peroni, I have only one more observation to make," again resumed the mate, "remember, sir, the consequences of your obstinacy—and, I may add, inexperience—will be upon your own head: I will not, in any way, be answerable for what what may happen this night. I now resign into your hands the situation I have held as mate of this vessel. You may appoint another man to the vacancy as soon as you please; and henceforth I will thank you to consider me only as your passenger, not forgetting, sir, that while I remain on board the Fanny, I shall expect that civility from you, which is due to one, no longer a member of your crew."

After saying this, Mr. James seated himself upon the nearest cannonade, with a determination not to interfere any more with the duty of the ship, unless he saw that

his services and skill were absolutely necessary for the safety of the Brigantine, and the preservation of the lives of his shipmates. There he sat, with all the sullenness of a man whose pride had been insulted, depicted upon his brow. This, too, while in the strict performance of his duty, which he so well knew. — Mr. James was cut to the very soul.

The atmosphere had become most oppressively sultry, and the under growling of the already agitated main was very distinct and alarming. Still the haughty young skipper heeded it not; indeed, however necessary even he himself might now think it was, to reduce the useless canvass which flapped most forebodingly against the masts, it seemed as though his obstinate disposition would not allow him to do it; and why? merely because one, who was his inferior in command, had but a minute before so strongly recommended it to be done. The albatross, at the mast head, again stretched out her wings, and swung them to and fro: another dismal and warning croak was heard as a sort of farewell summons, that those below her might prepare for what was coming. Again she flapped her great long pinions, as she let go her hold of the vane, and slowly ascended, in almost a perpendicular direction, through the thick close atmosphere, towards the regions of the sky above.

At this moment, the helmsman again returned upon deck, and presented the rifle to its owner, who instantly, fixing the piece firmly to his shoulder, took an aim at the bird, that was soaring in the heavens, with most fatal precision.

Old Cummins, the boatswain, had imperceptibly stolen up to the side of his commander, and, after the usual hitch up of his waistband, and turn over of the quid in his

mouth, ventured to whisper in his ear:—"Sure-ly yer honor aint agoing to have a slap at that ere harmless and friendly cratur aloft there, are you? If you kill that ere bird, Captain, harm will as sure come of it to this craft, and all aboard her, as sure, ay, as sure as my name's Joe Cummins."

Scarcely had the last sentence been uttered by the seaman, when the sharp crack of the rifle was heard to reverberate along the deck of the Brigantine: the smoke was yet clinging to the mouth of the fatal instrument of destruction, when the albatross was observed to topple over in the air; having lost the use of its limbs, it descended with rapid velocity upon the deck, at the foot of the skilful marksman. A profound silence was kept by the whole of the crew, during the performance of this rash—and, in their then critical situation, extremely thoughtless—act of their presumptuous and obstinate young Captain.

"The vessel's doom'd!—the vessel's doom'd!" whispered the men, one to another: while collecting in groups, with most doleful and superstitious fear depicted on their countenances, they talked over the likelihood of what would be the result of this murderous proceeding.

I'll tell you what I'm arter thinking, Captain,—axing yer honor's pardon—that you will prove that ere to be a werry unlucky shot; depend upon it, harm will come to us now, as sure as I'm your bo-sun. It's my opinion, sir,—axing your pardon for making so bold—but I —"

Here, old Cummins's speech was cut short, for the skipper had taken hold of the extreme ends of the bird's wings, while the former was addressing him; then swinging it round his head, with that perfect ease which

his muscular strength gave him, he dashed its bloody body, through which the rifle ball had perforated, against the little fat fellow's face. With such violence was the blow given, that it completely spun the boatswain round on his legs, and nearly capsized him.

"Take that, fellow, for your assurance in daring to give me an opinion of the propriety or impropriety of what I am pleased to do on board this vessel; I will let you know, fellow, that I am Captain here:" then repeating the blow, added—"and take that! lubber-headed fool, for your insolence; I'll teach you, sirrah, that none under my command shall dictate to me, let their situation on board be what it may." As the skipper pronounced the last sentence, his eye was cast with a malicious glance upon the form of his sullen mate. Then, again, he turned his invective against the unfortunate boatswain, whom he kicked with such brutish force, on a certain part behind, that the blow sent the poor fellow reeling right against the bulwarks of the vessel: "And take that! fellow," said he, at the same time throwing the dead albatross, with an unerring aim, at old Cummins's head, "as a detonation of the contempt that I have for all your foolish fear and superstitious humbug."

Having spoke thus, the skipper walked leisurely over to the opposite side of the deck, and calmly looked out upon the sea, as though he were in deep thought.

THE GALE AND HURRICANE.

RETRIBUTION, direful retribution was at hand, for that wanton and unnecessary shedding of innocent blood—for that presumptuous and wicked act. Instead of thus cruelly slaying one of God's creatures, how much more

acceptable would the slayer have appeared in the eyes of that all-wise Ruler of the elements, had he silently turned his thoughts to Him, and sought his succour against the peril contained in that fearful blast, which, with the speed of lightning, swept o'er the deep blue ocean towards his unprepared bark. Ah! thou inoffensive and murdered bird! the vengeance of heaven is thine—see the tempest in all its terrible anger bursts upon the beautiful little Brigantine—see that huge, powerful, and all-levelling wave now washes o'er her deck from stem to stern, and heaves everything of a moveable nature along with it, far, far away to leeward of the vessel. For a second or two, the dead body of the albatross was seen floating on the top of a mountain billow; then sinking down into the deep abyss beneath, was lost to sight for ever.

At this moment, the large Newfoundland dog, Dolphin, sprung overboard, at a single bound, into the boiling spray, but for what purpose, all on deck were too much engaged to observe, save one, and that one was Mr. James, the mate. He was the only being, except Him who seeth all things, that knew the cause thereof. In vain that ill-used but kind hearted man shouted, and encouraged the noble animal by every gesticulation of body he could think of; in vain he made several well-meant, but, alas! fruitless attempts to heave the end of a rope to him; again he tried—again he shouted, and quickly another coil was cast, but all his most strenuous efforts were of no avail, for the dog was far beyond his reach astern. At length, becoming quite exhausted with fatigue, he shrieked one more feeble shout of encouragement to the animal, as he totally receded from his sight, then lifting up his hands

in the attitude of supplication and despair, muttered to himself—"This! this is indeed a severe, although just retribution for his obstinate and wicked presumption: this must be deeply felt by him—this must, indeed, fell his proud and haughty spirit. Yet, O God! thy will be done!"

The clouds, as it were, suddenly bilged, and hurled down a deluge upon the decks of the doomed vessel. The gloom of approaching night was rendered more horribly dense and black by the impenetrable mist brought upon the wings of that furious gale, which wreaked itself with fearful violence upon the quarter of the Brigantine. Snap went the main t'gallant-mast and spritsail yard; while the beautifully tapered spar at the fore, bent like a reed before the wind. Confusion began to reign on board: the masts, yards, sails, shrouds, and running rigging of that smart little sea-boat were soon in as complete derangement as they were one hour before all tidiness, and in such excellent ship-shape order. Again the heavens opened, and torrents of rain descended therefrom. Another gust of wind, more fearful than the former one, tore the jib~~board~~ from its leach ropes. The whistling of the gale through the rigging, and the splashing of the waves as they curled over, and roared with aggravated rage at the violence of their invisible brother element, were almost deafening. Still, above the loudest of the din and clamour that prevailed on deck, as the watch braced the yards to the wind—one voice was distinctly heard. There stood the young skipper, with a speaking-trumpet in his hand, proudly cheering on his men, and giving forth his orders with all coolness and intrepidity. He had, indeed, a master spirit within him, which seemed to increase in vigour as fresh difficulties

rose up to appal him. There he was—undaunted by danger, and still presumptuously confiding in his own vain strength, even while himself, and all others around him, were in the midst of the greatest peril.

“Let go the haliards fore and aft,” shouted he,—
“Call the hands out, you lubber-headed bo-sun.”

In obedience to this command, old Cummins applied the silver call, which was slung about his neck, to his mouth. Its shrill pipe was heard in every part of the vessel; after which, the usual hail of—“All hands hoy” was sung out by the boatswain, with a gruff and powerful voice.

What an animated picture was there! In a few seconds, the Brigantine was teeming with life in every part. How handsomely did she behave, as though conscious of what was required of her. How perfectly did she answer to her helm—yet, how truly pitiful were the laboured attempts that she made to escape each overwhelming wave. How great was the contrast—when her fragile frame contended with His Almighty power! The gale continued in its wild career; steadier, but with increased force. The weather foresheet, at this moment, was carried away, and nearly caused the ship to be taken aback. The sail began to shake, and to whirl the clue about in a dangerous manner, as the Brigantine's head flew up in the wind's eye. Again the skipper's voice was heard:—“Starboard.”

“Starboard it is, sir.”

“Meet her, boy, meet her. Sted-dy.”

“Meet her, it is, sir. Sted-dee,” answered the attentive seaman.

“Ease off that boom sheet there, abaft, and brail up the mainsail. Up aloft there, two of you, and cut away

flying loosely in the air, as he scampers over the trackless waste in his fierce and unbridled career.

The howling of the tempest, the flashes of the vivid lightning, the pelting of the hailstones, which were complete lumps of ice, carried to and fro with dangerous velocity by the furious and opposite gusts of wind blowing from all quarters of the compass at once, the loud and dreadful peals of thunder, the growling of the sea, its angry roar, intermingled with the shouts and blasphemous swearing of the skipper, his quick-spoken orders, and the yo-e-hos of the crew as they tailed on to the various ropes, together with the cracking of the sails, and the creaking of the masts and yards, accompanied by the fearful wash of the surrounding waters, and the dreadful clash of the contending elements, altogether formed such a scene of horror and devastation, that it is beyond the power of mortal genius to describe the same.

Again the thunder-speaking clouds clash with direful animosity, again the pattering rain descends in large and heavy drops, again the atmosphere becomes thick, sultry, and of a sulphureous smell, once more the heavens open, deluge upon deluge is poured therefrom, the wind buffeted, shrieked, and was still, the sea rolled higher and higher, then was blown back from whence it came, roaring and raging in wrath and foam, then an immense wave completely buried the beautiful little craft, then again—she appeared dancing and saucy as ever. At length the clouds clashed, and seemed to split in a blaze; a ball of vivid fire darted through the haze, and divided the fore top mast to the cap, at the lowermost head. At this moment another violent gust came in all its fury upon the Brigantine unawares, and laid her upon her beam ends.

There lay the no longer beautiful little craft, an unmanageable log upon the water ; in a few minutes she must have gone down—nothing but the loss of her masts could avail her; still she floated. Her stern was already under water, while her keel forward was rising therefrom, her bowsprit being nearly perpendicular in the air. Still, most marvelously she floated. But hark!—whose voice is that?—another very conspicuous actor appears upon the stage—ah! it can be no other than Mr. James, the sullen mate, who now exerts himself to save the Brigantine.

“Cut away the masts,” he shouted—“the main mast first, for your lives, men—hatchets, quick, men, quick—for your lives cut away that main mast, or we perish—”

“Who dares to order my masts to be cut away, without first consulting me?” asked the violent young skipper, in a rage.

“Who dares to countermand that order now?” answered the mate, as he poised over his head a hatchet which he had seized from one of the men, in a most menacing attitude. The look of the mate, the posture in which he stood, and the determined manner in which he spoke, plainly signified that he would have split open the man’s skull who had dared, at that critical moment, to have been so fool-hardy. Whether Captain Peroni heard the answer of Mr. James, or saw the raised hatchet ready to descend upon his head, had he again opened his mouth in reply, we know not, for another circumstance put an end to the altercation between the two. A laniard, belonging to some part of the rigging, having been carried away with a heavy block attached to it, struck the younger of the rivals such a violent

blow upon the temples that it felled him prostrate and senseless to all that was going on about him. Mr. James seized his commander by the arm just as he was falling over the lower bulwarks into the sea, and shoved him down the companion hatchway into the cabin. This was but a moment's delay to him, ere he joined the men who were cutting away at the shrouds of the main rigging. Then were heard those heart-rending cries of despair—"Cut away, My boys,—cut away, or we perish."

The strokes of the hatchet ceased, and a loud hurra, hurra, of joy was heard above the voice of the hurricane. Ah! what crash is that?—the main mast, with all its sails, gear, and rigging, had fallen over the side of the Brigantine into the deep deep sea, when she once more righted upon her keel.

The providential event of the mainmast going by the board just at the time it did, proved to be the preservation of the vessel and all on board. Mr. James, in consequence of the skipper's accident, took upon himself the command of the craft, and got her scudding before the wind as soon as it was prudent so to do, under the before mentioned storm stay-sail, and close reefed fore course. The hurricane settled, and a strong breeze from the south west sprung up. The fore mast, which was also sprung in the hurricane, being unable to bear the strain upon it, at last reeled and snapped off close to the deck. There lay the dismasted hull, a mere log and a wreck upon the water.

The sea continued to run so very high, that it was with the greatest difficulty they could keep the vessel's head to the wind, and it was now impossible for fear of shipping the sea over her stern; a single stroke from

one of the heavy waves that surrounded her would doubtless have sunk the *Fanny* in her present crippled condition.

In this state we will leave the Brigantine for awhile, and introduce our readers on board the other ship which was witness of the *Fanny's* deplorable plight, as well as a participator in the hurricane.

THE WEST INDIAMAN.

THE *Diana* of Liverpool was a large outward-bound West Indiaman, of about eight hundred tons burthen. The injuries she received in the hurricane were slight in comparison with those of the *Fanny*. Her jib-booms were carried away close to the bowsprit, her mizen-top mast broke off about half way down, and her cross-jack yard was sprung, which together with the loss of a little gear and rigging, was all the harm she had sustained.

The heavy swell of the sea had considerably gone down, and the breeze which still remained steady from the south west could not now be called even half a gale, for it too had very much subsided. The *Diana* was braced sharp up under her close reefed topsail-storm staysail in the place of an inner jib and reef driver. Her top-gallant masts and small spars had been struck previous to the commencement of the gale; and her uninjured sails were furled directly after her mizen-top mast and jib-boom were carried away. The bulky craft weathered the hurricane under bare poles; and then scudded before the sow-wester that succeeded it in her present trim.

There she was clumsily heeling to the breeze, more like a huge wash-tub upon the water, than a smart and

elegant built ship. The *Diana* was as unfit to be contrasted with our beautiful little Brigantine, as would be the heavy footed and slow moving bear with the nimble and elastic antelope. The build of the *Fanny* gave her the speed of the greyhound, while the West Indiaman was framed only for stowage. The one, though light, was of exceeding great strength, and with the appearance of life itself—the perfect model of what a sea boat ought to be—while the other was heavy, sluggish in her speed, and in the form of her hull not the best fashioned for contending with a heavy sea. Nevertheless, the latter ship had escaped the best of the two vessels from the effects of the tempest—how could this be?—it is soon explained. The *Diana* was commanded by prudent caution and experience, she having a *seaman* for her captain, while the *Fanny* was allowed to run wild in her course, being under the command of one who was not only ignorant, but too self opiniated to listen to the voice of reason.

The Captain and chief mate of the West Indiaman were walking upon the poop together, in earnest conversation. The former, from his brogue, was easily recognised to be a native of the emerald isle. He was below the middle stature, with a round good-humoured countenance; full of vivacity in his manner, and apparently rather facetious. The latter was a much taller man; well formed, but with a gloomy expression upon his brow, anything but prepossessing in his favour. The two were drest exactly alike, having on, what sailors call, their rough-weather rigging, consisting of flushing jackets and trousers, and glazed hats attached to the button-holes in the collars of the former, with pieces of laniard, to prevent their being blown overboard. Each

had a speaking-trumpet in his hand, through which they occasionally hailed the men stationed in different parts of the ship.

"Arrah, but I think she's a rogue, Edwards," said Captain Sullivan to his mate, "and takes us to be what sure enough, we are not, or else, why should her skipper have carried on so in the gale, if he had not wished to keep clear of us?"

"I cannot imagine, sir," answered Mr. Edwards, the mate of the West Indiaman, "what could be his motive for not reducing his canvass when he saw the storm approaching, unless the officer in charge of the deck was asleep on his watch."

"Perhaps he was—perhaps he was—and sure enough I'll be bound he was, Edwards," observed the little captain, as he applied the speaking-trumpet to his mouth, and hailed the man who was stationed in the fore-top to look out, in case the distressed vessel should make any signals of distress. "Fore top, there! do you see anything of the stranger?"

"I can see nothing of her, sir," answered the man.

"How did the craft bear, Edwards, when you last saw her?"

"She was rolling in the hollow of the sea, about three points on our weather bow, sir."

"I doubt the charming little crather has foundered, Edwards: poor thing, how handsomely did she behave when the gale first struck her, with all that crowd of canvass upon her. What her skipper was afther, I cannot think, with that large mainsail of his set. By the powers, what would have become of the Diana, if she had been caught in such a plight? Fore top, there! go up, my boy, to the top mast cross trees, and keep a

bright look out for the brig ; sing out if you hear a signal—d'ye hear me ? ”

“ Ay, ay, sir,” answered the man, as he ascended the weather shrouds to the mast head.

“ I tell you what, Edwards, if we do not see something of her shortly, I will ha-ave-to until daylight, entirely. I cannot think of laving mortal crathurs like ourselves to perish, for the want of a little friendly help. Och, I should not like to be thrated so my own sweet self, by any mother's son of a skipper, and that's what I should not—so let's ha-ave-to, Edwards.”

“ Very good, sir, I perfectly agree with you, and will see about it immediately.”

“ A gun, from the brig, sir,” sung out the look-out, at the mast head.

“ Where, my darling, where ? how does she bear from us ? By the holy St. Pathrick we will lend that pretty crathur a hand.”

“ Right on our weather bow, sir, a long distance off.”

“ That will do, my darling, come down again into the top, and keep your weather eye upon her ; sing out when she fires again. I say, Edwards, we must not ha-ave-to now, we will bear down to her ; see to a gun being got ready forrard, we must answer her signal, or she will think we have not seen her.”

“ Ay, ay, sir,” answered the mate, and immediately went on to the fore-castle, to give orders for preparing to answer the next signal from the Brigantine.

The carronade upon the Diana's fore-castle was soon in readiness. There stood a group of anxious seamen, all of whom felt warm-hearted towards their brethren in distress, and would willingly have risked their own lives to render them every assistance.

"Now, Thompson, my boy, stand by to fire as soon as the Captain gives the order from abaft," said the mate, as he left the fore part of the ship, and again joined his commander on the poop.

"All ready with the gun forrard, Captain Sullivan."

"Thank you, Edwards, I will tell them when to fire. But what think you of burning a blue light, my darling? Och, botheration to my thick skull, we ought to have thought of that before."

"Under present circumstances, sir, I do not think it would be advisable to do so; for, although we are able to bear down to the brig, she may be in such a crippled state as not to be able to advance towards us; therefore the light would be of no use to her, while at the same time it would so blind us with its lurid glare, that we should not be able to see her signals, and consequently should have no guide to steer by."

"Very good reasoning that, Edwards, my boy. Well, what do you say aloft there?"

"A double gun from the brig, sir," sung out the topman.

"Forksel there!"

"Sir!"

"Fire, and charge again."

The sound of the gun went booming along the water to leeward, and soon was lost in the distance. The signals between the two ships were repeated.

"What time is it, Edwards?"

"Just seven bells, sir."

"Then in another half hour it will be twelve o'clock, sure enough; when the watch is changed we will put the ship about, Edwards, as all hands will be on deck then; and we had better not disturb the poor fellows

any more to-night, for they have had a harassing time of it. When we have got every thing snug on the other tack, let the starboard watch be called."

"It shall be attended to as you desire, Captain Sullivan; indeed, the poor fellows have had a harassing watch these last four hours; I never witnessed any gale half so heavy; and what might have been the consequence to us had the precaution I took been neglected, it is impossible for me to say."

"Och, my darling, and sure enough you have my most hearty thanks for acting in the prompt manner you did upon your own responsibility. Many captains might have blamed you for taking so much upon yourself without first consulting your skipper, and have lost their ship for their pains; but I trust that I too well know the value of a man like yourself, Edwards, to blame you for encroaching upon my prerogative. What would be the use of a chief mate to the captain of a vessel, if the latter had not the greatest reliance upon his officer's abilities and judgment in cases of emergency, such as we have experienced this night?"

"Very little use indeed, sir, I am thinking; but there are many skippers who are so jealous of their authority being in the least degree slighted, that would think differently from you, Captain Sullivan, upon this subject."

"I grant there are: but, depend upon it, they are not the most proper men to take command of a ship. The skipper and his chief mate should go hand in hand, for they much depend upon each other in their respective situations. And as a proof of this being my wish, I again repeat, that you have my hearty thanks for the management of my ship, and the forecast you manifested towards the preservation of my spars ere this night's

gale commenced ; and you may depend upon it, Mr. Edwards, I shall not fail to speak in your favour to the owners when we arrive in harbour."

"Captain Sullivan ! I am extremely obliged to you for your good intentions ; but there is something within my breast that tells me you will not have to give yourself the trouble to speak at all, in my favour, to the owners of the *Diana*."

"Why, Edwards, my darling, what is the matter ?"

"A presentiment, sir, merely a presentiment."

"A presentiment ! a presentiment ! why, by the holy St. Pathrick, sure that doesn't mane a ghost, does it ? What makes you look so pale, Edwards, my darling ? You are not growing superstitious, are you ? Och, botheration if you have seen the flying Dutchman in the gale, why say so at once ; but if only the confum-mifications of your own brain bewilder you, why you will soon get over it. Pooh, pooh, man, its all stuff, depend upon it, and nothing else at-all, at-all."

"No, Captain Sullivan, I have not seen the flying Dutchman," said the mate, in solemn voice, "but I have had a most remarkable dream, part of which has already come to pass, and I have a strange foreboding of evil about to happen me before many hours are fled, in consequence thereof."

"A dhrame, a dhrame, let's have it by all manner of manes ! I do like to hear a good dhrame, on account of the wake that comes afther it. Go on, Edwards, my jewel of a boy ; let's have something comical, and not anything to set one's wig of an end. The dhrame—go on wid it, there's a darling."

"Listen, sir, and I will first relate to you the untimely fate of my family."

"I'm paying you the most illigant attention, and no mistake at-all, at-all."

THE DREAM.

THE mate commenced :—" I am the youngest but one, and the only survivor of five brothers, all of whom were brought up to a sea-life. The two eldest died of yellow fever, in the West Indies ; one was killed in an engagement with a French frigate ; and the youngest of the family has never been heard of since he left home eight years ago, as mate of a vessel which was totally wrecked on a lee shore, off the coast of Barbadoes, and all the crew, save the captain, were supposed to have met with a watery grave. It may appear strange to you, sir, and I have often-times ridiculed the assertion myself, that these four ill-fated men had a presentiment of evil about to happen to them some hours previous to their deaths taking place, and even mentioned the same to their ship-mates. I have had a similar warning, Captain Sullivan, within the last four-and-twenty hours."

"And it is the dhrame you mane now, sure enough?"

"Yes, sir, it was in the dream which I was going to relate to you that I received my warning."

"Och, then I would not let it pother me so; why you are afther letting it scare you, Edwards, my darling. I'd think no more of it, and not take on so about sich thrifles; these sort o' vagaries are flam, Edwards, my chick, and sure enough they are, and no mistake."

"Whether it be as you say or not, Captain Sullivan, I cannot for the life of me obliterate the impression from my mind that some harm is about to befall me. Oh, sir, I can scarcely bear to recall it to memory, even

now I am in converse with you, whom I know to be a living being. I shudder to speak of what was revealed to me last night; but, without further preface, I will tell you all, sir."

"Well honey, let's have it."

"I had not been in my cot many minutes before I was buried in the arms of Morpheus—"

"What, was that the name of your ghost then?"

"Attention, sir, if you please.—My imagination wandered over bygone scenes, and at last led me to the peaceful home of my youth. There sat my aged sire in the snug little parlour, with his feet upon the fender, in a meditative mood. He started at my entrance, parted the silvery locks on his forehead which obstructed his sight, recognized, and rose to welcome me with a tear —'My only remaining child,' he sobbed, 'receive the blessing of your parent.'—He then alluded to my deceased brothers' deaths, and related over again the fate of each separately. By the time he had done so, his feelings were so harrowed at the recollection, that I was obliged to lead him to his chamber and see him at rest. I then returned to the parlour, and threw myself upon the sofa. Presently I saw the forms of my three elder brothers stand before me, silent as death, marble-like in posture, and clothed in white raiment, like spirits of the other world—"

"Oh dear! what was that?" exclaimed the little captain, with some signs of fear about him, "did you not hear something whisk by us just then in the dark, very much like a—ba, stuff, botheration! I am beginning to be an ould woman like yourself, Edwards. But nevertheless, I think you had better tell me the rest to-morrow morning, at breakfast; those sort o'things are better

heard by daylight, and much more amusing than when told in the dark."

"I shall never see to-morrow's dawn, Captain Sullivan, therefore I will relate what I have to tell now. There stood the three spirits of my brothers, ghastly and silent before me—"

"Now botheration to thee, Edwards, do tell me the remainder in the morning.—Well, and what did these spirits say?" asked the skipper, evidently alarmed at his mate's solemn manner, yet at the same time anxious to hear the result of the dream.

"They never spoke at all, sir, but continued to stand firm and immoveable as statues—"

"Bless us, what was that?—how that croeck yard keeps creaking."

"It is sprung, sir,"

"Oh, very well shove on then, or we shall have it twelve bells before you have finished your dhrame."

sh-! "There stood the three in white, when they were joined by another, but the last was apparently a being of this world, and bore the form of my younger brother James, who thus addressed me—'Brother Charles' said this mysterious being, 'you have long supposed me to have been lost, and my spirit in fellowship with these of our elder brethren now before you—but such is not the case, for there is a wide and impassable barrier between them and me: I am still a living man, and as much a being of this world as you are yourself, and I now appear to warn you of your death—prepare then, dear brother, for the change which will take place in less than thirty-six hours from the present time. I am younger than you, Charles, therefore it is only in the due course of nature that you should be called away

from this world of trial and vexation before me. Regret not your doom, but PREPARE!"

"Prepare!" responded the little captain, in a stifled and low sounding voice. The mate again resumed.

"A change came over the spirit of my dream, which the sight of yon brig has broke. I fancied myself on board of a strange craft like her, and that we were caught in the gale without having made any preparation. Therefore I saw all that has since taken place in the hurricane long before it happened; and very probably if it had not been for the presentiment that came over my mind in consequence thereof, we might not have been so well prepared for its fury as we were. Two parts of my dream have already come to pass: I have witnessed the hurricane, and I have seen a strange craft dismasted thereby, the vivid lightning of heaven illuminating the whole ocean around, enabled me more distinctly to view the devastating effects of the tempest upon yon tidy little craft. The presentiment I have of my own death, I doubt not will be speedily realized. Should it be so, Captain Sullivan, perhaps you will be kind enough to tell my wife that—"

"Och, botheration, bad luck to the dhrame! it is making a woman of thee, Edwards, and no mistake. Och, 'tis all stuff, and nothing else at-all at-all. But I see the quarter-master is gone forrard to strike eight bells—it is twelve o'clock."

"It is, sir—what may be your commands, Captain Sullivan?" asked Mr. Edwards, seemingly himself again.

"We will put the ship about, and run on the other tack until one bell, then I think we shall be some where in the wake of yon pratty little crathur the brig."

The mate having passed the captain's orders to the

boatswain, the voice of the latter party was soon heard singing out most lustily to the tune of

"All hands bout-ship, hoy!"

"Ready about. Raise tacks and sheets. Helms-a-lee!" shouted Captain Sullivan through his trumpet. The clumsy craft swung round but slowly on her keel, partly an account of her build, but more particularly on the present occasion because the driver would not jibe as it ought to do. The boom remained amidships, and the sail was shaking and filling first on one side and then on the other as it vainly tried to free itself from thralldom, the sheet having got jammed in the block. Mr. Edwards, with the assistance of two others, was striving with all his might to get it clear. For the purpose of having a better purchase upon the block, one of the three got astride the boom outside abaft all, when a sudden gust of wind carried away the tackle altogether from its fastening, and the boom being adrift, flew over to leeward, and struck with great violence against the mizen rigging. The shock caused the man who was astride the boom to loose his hold, and he fell into the sea. Immediately that awful cry of "man overboard, —man overboard," struck coldly to the hearts of every individual fore and aft of the ship.

Who that has felt the awe which sinks so deeply into the soul at the sound of that heart-rending cry first breaking upon the ear, in the loud warning voice of alarm, and then creeping forebodingly along the deck almost in silent whispering, as the anxious enquiry of "Who is it?—Who is it?" is heard to be asked—Who that has wandered over the fathomless ocean at midnight's darkest hour, thousands of furlongs from any shore, when the rush of meeting waters in the vessel's

wake causes such a splash and roar that mortal voice is scarcely distinguishable ; and has then heard the strong harrowing cry of despair which his drowning shipmate shrieks forth in his agony, growing fainter and fainter, until the noise of the remorseless waves, which are playfully bubbling about him, stifle his weak voice, and pitilessly mock his last gasp as he sinks into their all devouring bosom—Who that has heard these piercing and fearful sounds will not shudder when he recalls them to memory ? Who will not again feel the sympathy he then felt pervade his frame ? Who will not again shed that tear of compassion for his long lost shipmate ? Who has the heart that will not bleed at the recollection thereof ?

“Cut away the life buoys fore and aft,” shouted Captain Sullivan. Back the fore topsail there forrard, and burn a blue-light there abaft upon the taffrail. Bear a hand, my darlings, with the lee quarter cutter. Bad luck to you, what are you after—handsomely now as you lower her into the water—don’t be rash, my darlings, don’t be rash. Now, botheration, not so many of you at once—mind, or you will swamp the boat—steady now as you lower away—there you are, my hearties ; now bend your backs, and give way with a will—pull together, my darlings ; and hold your blue-light up in your hand, Mr. Snoville, or you will get it washed out, and no mistake. Cheerily, lads, cheerily—give a good hail. Och, by the powers, but you are rare broths of boys, every mother’s son of you, and that’s what you are, and no mistake at all !”

Thus did the little skipper superintend the lowering of the boat into the sea. The cutter in charge of Mr. Snoville, the second mate of the *Diana*, was soon a con-

siderable distance from the ship, her crew vociferating loudly all the time they were rowing, for the purpose of keeping up the spirits of the unfortunate man they were in quest of. The mate gave the order for silence, and desired them to lay upon their oars awhile, that they might hear if their hail was answered. All was still around them, save the sighing of the wind and the roar of the surrounding sea.

"Edwards, my darling," sung out Captain Sullivan from the forecandle, where he had gone to see that the fore topsail was properly placed aback. "Is Mr. Edwards on the poop there?"

"Not here, sir," answered one of the men who were looking over the stern at their shipmates in the boat.

"It is Mr. Edwards who has fallen overboard, sir," whispered another into the ear of his commander as he stood by his side.

"Who, Mr. Edwards say you?"

"Yes, sir, it was he who got astride the boom just before the block tackle was carried away."

"Oh, by the powers, then I'm kilt right out!" said the skipper, and fell with his back against the foremast for support. The report just given him was such a shock to his senses, that he almost fainted in consequence thereof. "Oh! the dhrame, the dhrame.—Och, botheration to the dhrame, what shout was that?"

"It's from the cutter, sir, they seem to have found Mr. Edwards."

"By the holy St. Pathrick, so they have—I see, I see, they are now lifting him into the boat—sure he is not dead—no, no, that cannot be—hark, they shout again. Good lads, hurra, my souls, again hurra. Och, botheration to the dhrame, it will like to turn out blarney

after all—sure enough will it, and no mistake at-all at-all."

The sound of the splashing oars was by this time very distinguishable, as the cutter returned to the ship; she was soon alongside, and the falls of the boat tackle, which hung from the davit heads, being speedily hooked on to her thwarts, she was hoisted to her original position on the lee quarter of the ship.

THE RESCUE.

"WELL, Snoville, my darling, and sure is Mr. Edwards alive now?" asked the captain, in an anxious and impatient manner, as the cutter was being hoisted up.

"Oh yes, sir, quite alive," answered the second mate, "but so much exhausted, that I very much fear the little dear will not survive."

"Och, botheration, but we'll make him survive—we'll put him in warm blankets, we'll pour some of the dear crathur down his throat—nay, by the powers, we'll smother him with kind attentions but we'll make him survive."

"Stand by to lend us a hand, will you be so good sir," said Mr. Snoville, as he assisted to hand the supposed body of Mr. Edwards over the bulwarks of the Diana.

"Och, by the powers, and I will be right glad to see your ugly phiz again, old boy—poor Edwards. Aisy now, Snoville, as you heave. The captain stretched out his arms, and received an inanimate bundle. "Oh, cry matches!" exclaimed he aloud.—"By St. Pathrick, what have you brought here, Snoville—what a metamorphosis is this. Why, here's a child and a dog—sure enough there's a mistake about this. Bad luck to you,

why where did you pick up these amphibious craythurs? Have you not got poor Edwards also?"

"Look out, sir, and mind yourself," answered the officer in charge of the boat.

"Ay, ay, darling, hand over—now, you spalpeens, do be aisy now, or sure you'll hurt the man—poor Edwards. Och, botheration to thee, Snoville, what do you heave the drowned man on board afther that fashion for? You've murthered him now right out, and sure enough you have—bad luck to you!"

"It is only the life buoy, sir."

"A life buoy, and so it is, and nothing else at all. Well, let us look what dialect it spakes, for it is none of ours I see—oh, I have it now, and no mistake—"The Fanny of Buenos Ayres." Well sure now, that must be the name of yon pretty little craft we were afther bearing down to."

"Most probably the child and dog belong to that vessel, sir."

"Clear reasoning that Snoville; but our good intentions with respect to poor Edwards must not be delayed; so off again, my darling, and thry if you cannot pick up your messmate."

The cutter was again dispatched on a voyage of discovery, but returned after a fruitless search, and was made fast on the Diana's quarter. Poor Edwards was given up for lost.

The life buoy found with the child and dog had been cut away from the Brigantine by her mate, Mr. James, as soon as he saw the former washed from her deck. This, together with the dog's immense aquatic strength, was the means by which the little girl was kept afloat during the hurricane. There lay the inanimate form of that

once sprightly child upon the deck, while her faithful and truly devoted preserver kept licking her pale cheeks with his warm reviving tongue; there she lay quite exhausted, and almost at life's latest ebb.

Captain Sullivan, who, independently of all his eccentricity, was really a kind-hearted man, ordered his own cot to be prepared immediately for the little girl, who was treated with every care and attention. The dog would not leave his charge for a moment, neither would he be persuaded to eat of anything that was offered him, until he saw the darling child again open her dark but no longer sparkling eyes, to greet him with her thanks. The animal sprung to the side of her cot as soon as he heard her voice, and placing the food that had been given him before her, again began to lick her little hands and face.

"Poor Dolphin—good Dolphin—Brunetta will love you for this." Here the child's senses began to wander, when she exclaimed aloud—"Oh, papa, naughty papa, how cruel of you to shoot that poor harmless bird, see how it bleeds, its pretty white feathers are all over blood. Poor old Cummins. Poor bird. Oh Rebecca, Rebecca, come to me, I am in the water, I shall be drowned, come to your little Brunetta, dear, dear Rebecca. See his face is all over blood—poor old Cummins—cruel papa. Poor Dolphin—look, look—see good Mr. James there, he throws out a rope—catch it Dolphin—good Dolphin. Good-bye, Mr. James—good Mr. James—Brunetta will love you for that. Cruel papa. Poor Dolphin, you snort. Oh, Rebecca, the water will choak me—oh! I shall be drowned!—oh! Rebec—" Here the little sufferer gradually dozed into a profound sleep, which lasted for several hours, during which, she was violently

convulsed. It was that kind of sleep which exhaustion alone can produce. The faithful dog never once left her while she remained in this state, but continued licking her face and hands in the most gentle manner. The Diana was hove-to until morning.

Daylight, long wished for by many on that perilous night, was at length ushered in upon the ocean, bright, clear, and cloudless. The sea had become wonderfully smooth, considering how rough and turbulent it had been only a few hours previous. The Brigantine was supposed to have foundered, as they had not seen any signals from her since they hove-to, and her hull was no where visible. Nothing could be seen either of the unfortunate mate of the Diana, or of the life buoys which had been cast away for the preservation of his life. His shipmates were now certain that he must have perished in the bosom of that fathomless deep, where many a good sailor had sunk before him.

"And sure enough now, poor Charley's dhrame was not all blarney, but rael presintiment, and nothing else at-all, at-all," observed Captain Sullivan, as he gave the second mate orders for bracing up the yards, and proceeding on their course. "But, poor fellow, we have done all we can, you know, Snoville, and so we must now leave him, however much it goes against our humanity to do so. Carry as much canvass as the old crathur will bear, Snoville; and let me know when there is a change in the wind, or if you see anything more of the wreck."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the mate, and Captain Sullivan descended to his cabin.

Three days elapsed ere little Brunetta was sufficiently recovered to be able to walk even with the assistance of

Captain Sullivan upon the poop of the *Diana*. Dolphin was her constant attendant, and paraded the deck by her side, or capered about her, with an eye expressing all the delight that we could suppose to beam from an intellectual being on seeing a much beloved object snatched from a perilous death.

"You are a pratty crathur, Dolphin, indade you are, and no mistake at-all," said the little skipper, as he patted the dog on the head.

The fourth night set in cloudy and excessively dark; eight bells had just been struck, and the larboard watch was called. The ship was going at the rate of about eight knots an hour. All was still and quiet upon deck, when the man who had the look-out upon the bowsprit, sung out lustily:

"Starboard, hard a starboard with the helm abaft."

"Starboard, hard—it is so," answered the man who was steering.

The long dismasted hull of a small vessel at this moment was seen to float by the gangway of the *Diana*. Captain Sullivan immediately ordered his own vessel to be hove-to, and to be placed alongside the hull. He hailed the stranger—

"Ship there, ahoy!"

"Hollo!" was the answer.

"What ship is that? and where are you bound for?"

"The *Fanny Brigantine* of Buenos Ayres—homeward bound, with a cargo of dry goods for the Spanish coast."

"Have you lost a child and a dog, because we have taken them up, as well as a life buoy, with the name of your vessel upon it?"

"Yes, sir," answered another voice from the *Brigan-*

tine: "they were washed overboard in the hurricane which carried away our masts, four nights ago."

"Och! and by the powers, but that is Edward's voice, sure enough now. Ho! ho! there, on board the brig—how are you, Edwards, afther your ducking, my darling?"

"Who calls Edwards?" asked the voice in reply."

"Why, me, Pathrick Sullivan, your own dear captain, to be sure—who else would make so free? Let us have none o' your blarney now, but tell us how you have been saved, my jewel, and that you are not dhrowned, sure."

"I, like the rest, have been saved by Providence, I suppose, sir."

"Well, I thought so, for, mind you, that same Providence is a darling of a trump sometimes, Edwards, my boy. So your ominous presentiment has turned out all moonshine has it, and no mistake."

"I fancy it has, sir, since you have been fortunate enough to save the child and dog. Will you be kind enough to send them on board here, Captain, as well as a hawser to take us in tow."

"Is your craft leaky, Edwards, my darling."

"No, sir, her bottom is quite sound, or we could not have floated so long as we have in our present condition. With your assistance, sir, we may manage to get a jury foremast rigged, which will help us to the nearest port, where we intend putting in to refit."

"Well, Edwards, I've orthered a boat to be lowered to take the child and dog on board your craft; and you can return in her as soon as the hawser is paid out and made fast."

"Thank you sir."

"Look out, Edwards, the boat is shoved off, and will soon be alongside of you."

The child and dog were once more placed in safety on board the Brigantine, the hawser made fast, and the boat returned to the Diana, on whose deck a stranger appeared, and enquired who asked for Edwards.

"Why me, to be sure, my darling," answered Captain Sullivan, at the same time holding a lantern to the stranger's face, "Do you think that I, Pat Sullivan, your own dear captain, could be desaved in your voice, Charley?—come, come now, none of your blarney, it wont do, it wont do, and that's what I mane, sure enough."

"You mistake me for another person, sir, I am persuaded," said the stranger, taking off his hat to show his features more distinctly.

"Och, and by the powers, do be aisy now. Would you thry to make me belave that I did not know your own dear self, Charley—oh, botheration, but you cannot desave me—you might as well say that your name is not Edwards."

"I certainly cannot deny that my name is Edwards, sir, but you have the advantage, for you are a perfect stranger to me. Besides, sir, my name is James Edwards, and not Charles, which seems to be the christian name of the individual whom you mistake me for. Take a closer survey of my features, sir—"

"Adun now, adun, for that must be Charley Edwards's voice, and none else, so let's have no more of your blarney. At laist, if it is not Charley that now stands before me, it is your own dear self, and no mistake at-all, at-all."

"I once had a brother by that name, sir, but many years have elapsed since my eyes gazed upon him. In youth we were deemed much alike in features, but a

series of crosses and hard servitude must have made me by this time much his inferior in personal appearance. Our voices too, I have been told, were most deceptively similar; and I doubt not, sir, it is my brother whom you now take me for."

"Och, and by the powers, a brother say you, and his name Charles? Sure enough then I will have another squint at your phiz. Turn your face to the light—and indade then you are very much altered; why the fright of drowning has turned thee quite grey, boy—I mane white—yes, it is white, sure, that I mane your head is, and no mistake. And, sure, the fear of dhrowning could not have filled your face so full of holes afther this ugly fashion, and your figure too—oh! oh! by the holy St. Pathric, it is not my own dear Charley—botheration to thee for so desaiving me, lad—indade, indade, then you must be his younger brother whom he mintioned in his dhrame."

"And am I likely to see my brother Charles on board this vessel, sir?" asked the stranger, whom our readers have no doubt recognized to be Mr. James of the Brigantine, in a very anxious tone of voice.

"Och, and by the powers, don't ask me—now don't. The desait you have practised upon poor Pathric Sullivan, has almost kilt him outright, and no mistake. Oh, but the dhrame has come thrue afther all! Bless us, and preserve us from such like. Poor Charley is sure enough dhrowned and lost, and no mistake at all about it." Captain Sullivan seemed quite overcome with the excited state of his feelings, and retired to his cabin. Why Mr. James, the mate of the Brigantine, had reversed his name, is best known to himself; but that he had done so, not a shadow of a doubt remains, for he was indeed

the younger brother of the unfortunate Charles Edwards, who met with a watery grave, as already related.

Mr. James, whom we must for the future call Edwards, remained on board the *Diana* the whole of that night; and heard, with a grieved heart, the particulars of his brother Charles's mysterious presentiment and death. The next morning he returned to the *Fanny* with a party of men, and materials for rigging a jury foremast, and making her in sailing order, as far as circumstances would permit. The conceited young skipper of the Brigantine had recovered from his accident sufficiently to enable him to superintend the rigging of the new foremast; about which, the mate and he differed very much as to the manner in which it would be most advisable to accomplish the same. They got to high words; at length, Captain Peroni so far forgot himself, that he struck his own officer in the presence of his crew. The mate, considering the weak state of his offender, with true christian fortitude, forbore to retaliate, evincing manliness of courage in so doing; yet he determined on leaving the Brigantine, and offering his services to the captain of the *Diana*. As soon as the labour was finished, he returned with the men to that ship, accompanied by old Cummins, who also had determined no longer to remain under the command of one who so ill knew how to manage either his own violent temper or his ship. Captain Sullivan received them kindly; and immediately installed one in the place of his deceased brother, while the other acted as a sort of supernumerary, giving his services in any part of the ship where they were acceptable or required.

When the next morning dawned, the Brigantine was no where to be seen. Captain Peroni had given direc-

tions for the hawser to be cast off as soon as the darkness of the previous night set in ; then placing the head of his vessel in a directly opposite course to that of the Diana, soon intervened a wide space of sea between the two vessels.

Reader, the beautiful little Brigantine, which was dismasted in the hurricane, was a "*Contraband Trader*." When we next notice her, she will assume a very different and more dangerous character. The Diana was an honest Merchantman. Both vessels were upon the ocean when we first introduced them to you ; on their own element we will now leave them, pursuing each her separate calling. Such is the termination of our first story.

CHAPTER II.

THE MIDSHIPMAN.

THE time to which we refer our reader, was at that period of the late war when the French government, no doubt emboldened by their fortunate campaigns in various parts of the world, and envious of our successful trade in the West Indies, made several desperate attempts to take from us some of the most flourishing colonies we possessed in these seas, upon which many of their ships of war were kept constantly cruising.

They who have been at St. Vincents, which is one of the most salubrious of the Caribbee islands, are aware that the capital, Kingstown, lies near its south-west *extremity*, almost a mile along the shore of a deep and

beautiful bay, protected by a battery at the south or Cain Garden point, and by Fort Charlotte on the north-west, situated upon a high promontory, commanding the town and bay, and forming, together with the former, the chief defence of the island.

It was a beautiful evening in April, 18—; a welcome and cooling sea breeze played upon the rippling water, which was gratefully hailed by a crowd of curiosity-struck spectators, who were listlessly sauntering upon the beach, awaiting the arrival of a large looming ship that appeared in the offing. On the vessel came, dashing along with the tide, and majestically careening to the power that propelled her through the brine, looking in the distance like some white cloud settled down upon the ocean. Many were the surmises expressed respecting the stranger while out at sea; but not a single doubt remained on the minds of those who were gazing at her, with reference to her character, when they observed the smart and magic-like manner in which she was stripped of her canvas on arriving at the mooring ground in the centre of the bay. Scarcely had the splash made by her anchor falling into the water subsided, scarcely had the tide swung the vessel round with her stern towards the shore, ere the whole of her sails were observed to be furled, her yards squared, her running gear hauled taut, and everything aloft in perfect shipshape order. Such is the expertness and superior discipline that ever prevails on board a king's ship, which by this time the stranger was generally pronounced to be.

Soon a cutter was observed to be shoved from alongside the newly arrived vessel. As the boat was steered towards the landing place she seemed literally to be lifted out of the water by the powerful and well feathered

strokes of the six noble looking and black whiskered tars by whom her oars were manned. In the stern sheets of the boat sat a sour visaged man about thirty-five years of age, in the neat full dress uniform of a post-captain in the Royal British Navy; and opposite to him a delicate featured youth of thirteen or fourteen summers, in the uniform of a midshipman in the same service. The latter was acting in the capacity of officer in charge of the cutter.

Although a mere child in years when we ourselves served as midshipman on a foreign Station, never can we forget with what manly pride our young heart exulted the first time we were sent from the ship in charge of a boat; to what a vital importance did our young imagination magnify the orders as they were being delivered to us upon the quarter-deck by our superior officer,—in what a consequential tone the usual “ay, ay, sir,” was pronounced, as we sprung over the gangway and nimbly descended into the cutter alongside, which awaited only the arrival of her young commander to order her departure,—and then with what an air of officer-like dignity our seat was taken upon the gay scarlet-lined cloak which had been spread in her stern ready to receive us. Oh yes, these, these were the glorious rays of sunshine which occasionally illumined the otherwise dreary and monotonous days of our own early servitude. See with what thrilling ardour the young reefer takes charge of his ‘*first command*,’ and his lordly manner of reclining with his elbow rested upon the gunwale of the boat, and his eye alternately glancing with inward delight, first at the bright gilt buttons which adorn a spanking new uniform jacket, bent expressly for the occasion, and then with contempt at

the rueful countenance of an envying messmate who stands gazing at him from the poop of the vessel. How different are their feelings: the latter has just come up to take his watch, doomed to pace the deck in solitude for four long hours, and subject to the harassing caprice of a superior and perhaps spiteful officer; while the former is about to leave the prison-like ship to revel in liberty, and to be for a time his own master. There sit before him six athletic seamen, with their oars poised in the air, and watching his eye for the signal to let them fall; there seated on the quarter of the boat abaft him is the old grey-headed quarter master, awaiting his order (the order of a mere boy, to whom he might have been grandfather) whither to steer the cutter, which soon dances over the waves and leaves the ship far, far astern.

The crew of the cutter were all dressed alike, having on little round white straw hats and black ribbons, with a bright copper plate stuck upon the front of each, on which was engraved the name of the ship to which they belonged, black silk neckerchiefs, blue striped shirts, snow white trowsers, very wide at the foot, long quartered shoes, with neat brass buckles, and blue jackets, with a strip of white canvass stitched along the seams of the elbows and back, and brass anchor buttons. The bowman who stood with a boat hook held up ready to hold on by while the captain landed, was a flat nosed African, whose coal black face formed a striking contrast with the colour of his hat.

"Now, young gentleman, you'll remain in the cutter until I return," said Captain Dalrymple to his midshipman, in a sharp and authoritative tone of voice; then jumping on shore, he turned round and added, "and mind, sir, that you do not allow one of the men to leave

the boat on any pretext whatever—do you hear what I say, Mr. Reckless?”

“Ay, ay, sir,” answered the youngster, at the same instant respectfully raising his hat.

Captain Dalrymple, who had merely touched at St. Vincents for the purpose of delivering in person some private dispatches from the Admiral of the station to Sir James B——, the governor of the island, now directed his steps towards his Excellency's residence. His route lay through the famed and beautiful botanic garden, which is in the form of an oblong square, about a mile from Kingstown, and occupies nearly thirty acres of ground. The lower part of this picturesque spot is a level, but soon becomes a gradual ascent, until it terminates in a steep hill, a delightful mountain stream forming its northern boundary. The governor's house is situated near the upper part of the garden, commanding a splendid view: immediately below is to be seen the capital of the colony, in front the deep blue sea and the Grenadine isles in the distance, together with a magnificent vista, bounded on each side by a long and spacious avenue of lofty forest trees.

The midshipman whom we have just introduced, was about as mischievous a young scamp as ever mounted the ‘*curse*’* in his hat, or wore a dirk by his side. Nevertheless, Master Reuben Reckless was what might be termed a nice lad. He always paid the greatest deference to age, and was most respectful to those in authority over him; he was a clever boy too for his years, and therefore a favourite with his preceptors. His temper was not the best in the world, for he had a proud

* A term applied to the gold loop worn by naval officers in their hats,

and unbending spirit: we do not mean that sort of pride which is possessed by those who fancy they are better than their fellow mortals placed in a lower sphere of life to themselves, but we mean the sort of pride which superiority of mind alone can give. The youth's spirit was ever unbending when he deemed himself in a right cause, and not to be controlled by any individual of inferior intellect to his own; add to that, he was dauntless, and most presumptuously venturesome, with only such failings in his nature as were always subservient to his better judgment; the sincerity of his after repentance for any misdemeanor committed, convincing those about him that he possessed a heart not only open and forgiving, but also free from malicious resentment. Although of a slender form and, as we have before observed, delicate in appearance, still in any gymnastic pursuit, when perseverance, daring, and an extra degree of hardihood were required, our hero never manifested a want of that stimulating spirit which always enabled him to undergo the greatest fatigue, and to suffer the severest privations attendant upon the hazardous adventures of his profession with a fortitude equal to those of more robust frame. When only ten years old Reuben Reckless might have been termed both an enterprising and intelligent youth; but what made his society more particularly courted by boys of his own age was the readiness he ever evinced to defend the oppressed, and to hurl vengeance upon the heads of their seniors who would have tyrannically oppressed them; the latter feared the boldness of his disposition, so manifest in his independent and untameable demeanour towards them; while the former looked upon him as their champion and defender of those rights which others attempted to

usurp from them. Although our hero was always the first to lead his companions into a scrape, still he possessed that soul of honour within his bosom that made him scorn to desert them, or try to avoid his share of the punishment when justice overtook them. In conclusion we will just inform our readers that Reuben Reckless was an orphan, without a relation in the wide world that he knew of, and with only one friend to look up to, and that one friend was Captain the Honourable Timothy Dalrymple, under whose care he had been placed some eighteen months previous to the time of which we write. But more of that anon.

Scarcely was Captain Dalrymple out of sight of the landing place, when the young urchin of a reefer, after giving the same order to old Grant the coxswain which he had himself received, nimbly sprung on shore, and began to converse with the admiring populace who were idly gazing upon the beach. There strutted the little fellow unmindful of all that the captain had said to him, and with his thoughts only occupied by a sense of his own brief authority. He felt his importance gradually to grow upon him as every fresh questioner inquired the purport of the frigate's touching at the island. "Surely," thought he to himself, as he made his way through the crowd, "I may venture to leave *my command* for a short while in charge of the quartermaster. '*Old Crabs*'* cannot be back again just yet, therefore I think I may do it with safety. Besides, he leaves the ship in charge of his first lieutenant, consequently I see no reason why I should not leave my cutter in charge of mine. So

* A nickname by which Captain D. was known on board his own ship, and which was given to him on account of the particularly vinegar-like expression of his countenance.

here goes for a turn on shore, be the consequence what it may. Bless us! I stagger like a drunken man; why I shall forget how to walk soon; it is well that I have jumped on land if it be only to acquire my shore-going legs again; I have positively been on board so long that everything here seems to be whirling round with me. Hiccup!—Hollo! what, am I going to be sea sick—psha! Sea sick!—how can I be sea sick on terra-firma? What a green horn I am to think of it. Come, cheer up, my fine fellow, and let us see what is to be seen in this place. I will take a cruise. Ah! who be they? there seems to be a whole fleet of ladies there—that speaks well for the island at all events; I will bear down and hail them, make them shew their colours, overhaul their cargoes, and learn whether they talk black or white lingo—if I don't, '*blow me uppurds*, as old Grant says; so here goes." And off the youth started full run, after thus reasoning with himself.

Every step the Midshipman took placed a greater distance between himself and his charge; but as he had not been on shore for many, many months previous, and therefore having had no very recent opportunity of sporting his elegant and particularly active figure in full uniform to the landfolks, the temptation for committing such a dereliction of duty that now offered was too great to be withstood, and although ourselves of rigid disciplinarian principles, we are inclined to make some excuse for the youth on the present occasion. There promenaded the little reefer, as conceited as a young peacock on the first spreading of its tail: there he was with his large cocked hat stuck knowingly on one side of his head, in imitation, and assuming the swaggering walk of, an oldster in the service. His long blue coat

with its light buff lining and bright gilt buttons glittering in the sun, being carelessly thrown back, exposed the purity of a white jean waistcoat and trowsers of the same; his light and long quartered pumps were fastened with little silver buckles, and the expensively wrought dirk which hung from his side in a bright Spanish black leather sword belt, was the object of many a proud glance from its wearer.

Old Grant, the coxswain of the cutter, had served in his Majesty's navy nearly the whole of his life, having, as he used to boast, eat the King's beef and biscuit, and drank his grog ever since he was the height of a marling spike. Several years previous to the time of which we write, he had applied for and obtained his discharge, for the purpose of cruising a few years in the merchant service, that he might as he said see "*a bit o' the uniwarse.*" During that interval of time the old fellow joined a privateer and made a very profitable trip or two, after which he was wrecked on a lee shore and lost his all. He next shipped himself as boatswain on board a brigantine from Buenos Ayres, but she being engaged in the contraband trade, and not liking her skipper, Grant left her and went on board another ship which rendered the brig assistance after being dismasted in a hurricane. In this capacity our readers have already been introduced to him under the name of Joe Cummings, for while in the "*marchant sarvice,*" as he used to call it, he had gone under as many names as there are colours in a dying dolphin. At last what with privateering, contrabanding, and so forth, old Joe got quite tired of the free trade; and acting upon the moral of that old adage "*honesty is the best policy,*" he once more assumed his own name, volunteered his services to

the King again, and was at the present time the crack quarter-master of the frigate, in which capacity he had been rated ever since he first joined her. Joe was not quite so stout as when we last noticed him, but in consequence of the playful smirk of good humour that was seen ever to dwell in the happy expression of his small twinkling eyes, his shipmates had christened him by the very appropriate *sobriquet* of "*Laughing Joey*." The old quartermaster was a particularly steady character, a good seaman, and a general favourite fore and aft the ship; for his whole countenance bespoke that he was possessed not only of a humorous, but also of a very friendly disposition. Captain Dalrymple was proud of him—his officers respected him—and the young gentlemen (as midshipmen in his Majesty's service are cognomened) actually doated on old Joey, for truly to their fancy he was such a funny old chap.

"Now lads," said Joe to the men left under his charge as soon as the Midshipman had gone away from the boat, "I'll tell you wot I'm arter thinking—"

"That Mister Reckless is as parfect a young scape grace as ever mounted a jacket with a '*weekly account*'* on the collar," said one of the crew interrupting the old man in his speech.

"De-zactly so, Will, you've jist ta'en the werry observation out o' my werry mouth. But my boy, it arnt ship shape o' me to be a decouraging of you to talk unrespectful of your superior officer behind his back d'ye see, therefor I'm arter thinking you'd better clap a stopper on your jaw-tackle, and conwarse on another tack. And as I was jist about to obsarve lads, when Bill

* A term applied to the white patch worn on the collar of a naval uniform.

Drinkmore shoved in his oar, and run foul o' the yarn o' my discourse, that do'nt none o' ye be arter disobeying orders as that young harum-scarum of a reefer has done, cos why, d'ye see, the Skipper will be down upon us again in a jiffy, and if he diskivers any on ye '*no est in went-us.*' as my old uncle the parish schoolmaster used to say, why there will be old scratch to pay and no pitch hot that's all, as sure as I'm a living sinner and cox-sun o' this ere cutter. But to perwent all mishaps o' that ere kind, suppose you Mister Snowball there forward. was to shove her head off, and the rest o' ye give way a stroke or two, so that there may be a painter's length o' water between the boat and the land, lads, eh; for raelly I would not trust an inch to the honor o' ere o' one o' ye now you've the smell o' the grog shop so close under your jibs, and the young gentleman away from the cutter, indeed I would not, and that's poz—so shove off, blackee."

There is an old saying, that "when the cat is away the mice will play," and so it was with old Grant and his boat's crew, for no sooner had young Reckless left the cutter, than the man Bill Drinkmore, *alias* Dry Will, after hearing the termination of the coxswain's speech, jumped on shore, saying as he did so,

"Well blow me if I wont jist take a run down to old Moll Swipes at the slop shop round the corner there, and see if she can give me change for a dollar in 'rael warginny,' I shall be back again, Joey my chum, before Mister Reckless is aboard; so here goes either for some o' the old oman's 'nigger-head-bacca,' or the 'rael warginny.'"

"And here's arter you, Will, on the same tack," said the African bow man, who also jumped out of the

cutter, and both men soon became lost to view at a turn in the street.

"Hollo! avast there, you chaps!" in vain shouted old Grant after the truant delinquents, then muttered to himself, "Blame those two lads for a pair o' yarhous. They'll as sure get the young Reefer into a scrape as sure as my name's Laughing Joey the crack quarter-master o' the frigate. Blow me uppards, but how could I perwent it, that's all. Well, well, mappen they'll be back afore young Scape-grace, and mappen young Scape-grace will be aboard afore the Skipper, if so it will be all right as a trivet; but if contrariwise jist the werry '*wis ah we*' as the mountseers say, should be the case, why the young gen'lman will catch it, and I shall catch it, and by jingo we all shall catch it together, as sure as the Purser's a Jew. But, however, I see no jistifiable reasons why I should not try to make myself comfortable under all vexations: therefore I'll have a whiff or two o' bacca, and endeavour to blow away my evil prognostifications consarning the lads in smoke. Bless his Majesty King Georgy, but how am I to get a light, that's all; why spose I jump ashore also and fetch one. Tomkins, take care o' the cutter and the other lads while I go for a light, bo." Saying thus, the quarter-master left the boat in charge of his shipmate, while he went for a light. The old man soon returned with the lighted pipe in his mouth; but although he had but been gone a very few minutes, he was not back in time to prevent the escape of the remaining four of the cutter's crew, all of whom in his absence had fled, and left the boat fastened by a painter to the shore to take care of herself. Old Grant once more took his seat in her stern, and there contentedly smoked his short pipe alone

occasionally grumbling forth a hearty curse upon the man Tomkins for thus abusing the trust he had placed in him. "They are all alike," muttered the Coxswain to himself. "I'm blowed if there's a rush to choose among 'em; but it can't be helped now, so I'll e'en make myself happy about it,—the Skipper when he comes will find that Laughing Joey has not learnt how to desert his duty, therefore why should he fret arter them wot has;—a contented mind they say is a continual feast, and blow me upards if I'll not try it." In this kind of mood did old Grant remain for nearly half an hour, by which time five of the cutter's crew had returned to their duty. He then turned his eye in the direction taken by young Reckless, and exclaimed with a loud laugh.

"Well, bless my stars, if that young Reefer of ourn arnt a rummun; lookye, lads, if he beant arter a running his jib stem on to that ère small fry o' light petticoat craft on the beach below there. Ah! ah! ah!"

"Why, I say, Joëy," put in one of the crew, "he be's a bowing and scraping to the old leddy their convoy jist for all the world like that old French commodore we licked tother day, when he handed over his sword to our Skipper on the quarter-deck."

"Dezactly so, Jem. Bless the boy! I do raelly a somehow like that young gentleman, lads, for d'yè see he's one o' the right sort—a rael little sea-cock, I'm right down sartin that's wot he be from stem to starn. Bless the Middy, I say, ah! ah! ah! see at him agin how he's congeeing and scraping.—Why he's positively taen his '*fore-an-after*' * off to it. That young scape-grace must o' larnt all that ere sort o' fun and haviour.

* Cocked hat.

of some mountseer dancing-master I'm arter thinking."

"Werry likely he has, Joey."

"Oh, that he has, you may take your davy of it, as sure as I'm coxsun o' this ere cutter. Well, lads, I hope the young gentleman will be back afore the skipper, or if contrariwise be the case, why, d'ye see, he'll have to take a spell at the mast-head when he gets aboard the barky agin; and if that drunken swab, Dry Will, does not bear a hand and take his oar, I'm arter thinking he'll stand a fair chance of getting his shins in limbo until he's sober, and then two dozen for him at least. I know the Skipper will make him hug the gunner's wife if he catches him '*no-est-in-went-us*,' as I before observed, and blame me if us chaps shant get our grog stopt for a month all through the likes o' him. A curse say I, lads, upon that old bedlamite Moll Swipes, she's alays so fond o' giving us chaps the '*raw*' as she calls it. It's all for to chouse the dollars more readily out of our pockets, d'ye see. What, Snowball, you've had some o' the old oman's licker I diskiver, being as how, almost three sheets in the wind."

"Only a tooth full, Joey, my bo—not more I do assure ye, if I have I'm not a free nigger and that's poz," answered the black fellow, who appeared quite moozy in the bow of the boat.

"Well, well, I'll take good care that none o' ye give me the slip again, so shove her head off, Mister Blackee, we'll lie on our oars a distance off, until sich times as I see Mister Reckless or the Skipper coming aboard. You shant do old Joey no more, you chaps, we-out you have a swim for it, and that's poz, as you say, Snowball." In compliance with the quarter-master's order, the cutter was immediately pulled a few strokes from the beach

and kept lying off upon her oars until Captain Dalrymple and the Midshipman were seen returning in company. We will now notice the last named individual's pranks on shore.

Miss Grayburn, a middle aged maiden lady, without any pretensions whatever to personal beauty, was the sole proprietress of an establishment at St. Vincent's, for the education of the younger branches of her own sex. Her house stood in a very pleasant situation, close to the neighbourhood of Kingstown. On the evening of our hero's arrival upon the island, Miss G. was walking with several of her pupils upon the beach, that they might receive the benefit of the sea breeze. A very large and particularly handsome dog, of the Newfoundland breed, followed at the heels of this group of young ladies. From the steadiness of the animal's step, and the dimness of his eye, this faithful companion of their walks seemed to be far advanced in the winter of his days; still an occasional wag of his immense bushy tail, and the apparent bound of delight with which he sprang into the water for the amusement of the children, told that even age could not entirely destroy his natural propensity for laving in that element;—while the pupils were engaged throwing pieces of rubbish into the water for their old favourite, Dolphin, to fetch out again, their preceptress was viewing through her telescope the newly arrived ship.

"What are you looking at, madam?" asked a little fair-haired, round-faced girl.

"I'm examining the vessel yonder, my dear, that has not long since come into the harbour, but I cannot make out yet what is the name on her stern," answered Miss Grayburn.

"Let Caroline look, madame, will you be so kind; you know she has been a sailor, and therefore most likely will know the ship, and tell us all about it.— Shall I fetch her, Miss Grayburn?"

"You may call Miss Caroline, if you please love," answered the elder lady mildly.

"Caroline! Caroline!" joyfully shouted the little flaxen-haired girl; "Come up here instantly, Miss Grayburn wants you to look through her telescope, and to tell us all about yon fine large ship there in the bay. Come up here directly Caroline, there's a dear—never mind Dolphin just now—make haste, there's a kind creature."

The little sparkling black-eyed girl who approached at this vociferous summons, although by no means so fair as the one who had called her, looked like waxwork compared with some of the half creole children whom she had just left. There was much animation in the expression of her countenance, and wonderful elasticity of motion in the graceful carriage of her body; she took the proffered telescope in her hand and fixed it to her eye, with all the confidence of an old experienced mariner.

Several years had elapsed since the last named party was placed under the care of Miss Grayburn. The father of the young lady was the captain and owner of a small merchantman, which was driven into the bay of Kingstown in distress, having been dismasted several days previous. While Captain Peroni's vessel was in the harbour refitting, he heard of Miss Grayburn's establishment, and immediately made propositions to that lady for the care and education of his only and motherless child. The father afterwards very frequently touched

at St. Vincent's for the purpose of observing the progress his daughter made under her new instructor, and was so perfectly satisfied each time he did so, that he paid Miss G. most handsomely for the trouble she had taken with her wild young pupil. The Newfoundland dog was also taken into Miss Grayburn's establishment at the same time, for it, being much attached to the little female sailor, could not be persuaded to leave her. From the address and appearance of the little gipsy-eyed brunette, she might have been supposed to be advanced in her teens, but these were deceptive, she not being so old as she looked to be. The young lady still holding the telescope to her eye, at length exclaimed,

"Oh! 'tis an English frigate—a first class double banked frigate I perceive,—number—number—dear me I cannot make out her number, the pennant at her mast head shakes about so with the wind; but there's the Union Jack ensign at her peak I see, and the name on her stern is Sea—Sea—Sea something; have patience, Helen, and I'll make it out presently.—I must wipe and alter the focus of the glass first. There, now then I'll try.—Ah! I see now—Nymph! yes, Nymph is the other word—the Sea Nymph, Miss Grayburn, is the name of the stranger, and 'as fine a frigate as any in his Majesty's service,' I'll warrant the Skipper would say if we could but hear him speak of her."

"And indeed that's true as gospel, Miss," said young Reckless who at this moment joined the party assembled around her with the telescope. "The Sea Nymph is a fine frigate, and her Skipper is as fine a Captain you would say if you were only to see him as he is to day rigged out in his long togs, and besides which, she is well manned too, which is a most essential thing." Then

turning round and addressing the convoy of the party, as old Grant had styled Miss Grayburn, taking off his cocked hat in the most gallant manner imaginable, and assuming all the formal etiquette and old fashioned style of one who might have been his senior by half a century, he made that lady a most profound bow—"Madam," said he, "I am your most devoted and obsequious servant;" then to the young ones in like manner he added, "Young ladies, I am at your especial service, you may command me."

"And pray who may you be, my fine little warrior?" asked Miss G. with a kindly smile upon her face.

The young reefer on hearing this question addressed to him, drew himself up in a theatrical attitude, then with mock gravity and a most consequential tone of voice, answered, "Madam, I am Mister Reuben Reckless, of his Britannic Majesty's Royal Navy, quarter-deck midshipman of the Sea Nymph frigate; log-book-keeper to the first lieutenant; skipper of the starboard quarter cutter; cox-sun of the captain's gig; officer in charge of the boat there lying off the beach below; and—and—let me consider—oh, that is all I believe, madam at your service."

"Oh, gracious!" exclaimed the little dark eye, at the same time mimicking the young gentleman's consequential manner and attitude. "What a handle you have to your name, why you quite out-do me in that respect Mister Reuben Reckless, of his Britannic Majesty's Royal Navy; and—and, pray what was all the rest you spoke of? Oh, I remember,—the cutter—then I suppose the boat's crew below there are your men, and at the present time under your command, although you be not on board your charge. Well now really Mister

Reuben Reckless you are indeed a nice sort of a skipper, I don't think, to leave your boat in this manner."

"Yes, my little satirist, that cutter is my first command, and this is the very first trip I have made in charge of her. I hope some day or other to be the captain of as fine a frigate as the *Sea Nymph* there; and perhaps I may be an Admiral, provided I do not get shot before I arrive at that honor, by a pair of such dangerous missiles, as those fine sparkling black diamond eyes of yours my little lady."

"Don't little me over so Master Impertinence, I'll have you to know, sir, that I am not to be made small of by such as you, although you be all the fine names you have just now given yourself."

"Well, well, my sweet one, don't pout so about it, and you shall not be called little any more—not by me however," said the offender in a soothing and repentant tone.

During this colloquy the Newfoundland dog had shown various signs of a friendly disposition towards the young naval officer by jumping upon and capering about him until reprimanded by his young mistress for making so free.

"Down Dolphin! down, sir, I say.—Rude dog—how dare you take such liberties with a stranger—don't you know that the swaggering young middy wishes to be thought a skipper by us lubberly greenhorns, as no doubt he fancies the whole of us to be? but he is mistaken I can assure him, we are not so green as he supposes."

"Hollo! avast there, Miss! I hear by your tongue that you are a bit of a pirate sailing under false colors. Pray, if I am allowed to ask the question, what do you

know about middies, skippers, lubberly greenhorns, and so forth? You're a more wide awake craft than I took you for I perceive. Come with me, my dear, I wish to have a little private confab with you, if you please to grant me that favor." Saying thus our hero led the young lady apart from the rest of the group, and entered into close conversation with her. The two juveniles soon became perfectly friendly with each other, indeed as much so as if they had been acquainted for a considerable time. Although Reuben was a 'forward young monkey' as the little dark eye was bewitchingly disposed to call him at times, still it was evident from her manner that she liked his attention to herself none the less for his being so; besides the beauty and neatness of the boy's uniform, which was so becoming to his slender figure, together with the dirk and sword-belt that he wore by his side, possessing great attraction in themselves, altogether formed such an irresistible charm, that the young lady, whose dignity had been offended such a short while before, could not refuse the homage which their wearer seemed anxious to pay her in preference to the rest of her companions.

Captain Dalrymple having delivered his despatches to Sir James B — and having at the same time received intelligence from his excellency respecting the movements of the enemy, that determined him upon putting to sea again without any further delay, once more turned his steps towards the beach. He returned by precisely the same route as he went, which, as we before mentioned, was through the beautiful botanic garden, in the upper part of which the governor's house stood. On arriving at a shrubbery that completely overshadowed his path, the captain's ears were assailed by the noise of

many voices joining in merriment and obstreperous laughter; but how very much was his astonishment augmented when he distinctly heard his own name several times repeated aloud by some individual connected with the party who were amusing themselves upon the green near to where he stood. Captain Dalrymple peeped through the foliage that completely hid him from view, to see if he could recognize any one whom he knew. He observed a party of girls formed in a ring by taking hold of each others' hands, in the centre of which he perceived a youth without either coat, hat, or neckerchief, who appeared to be the second principal actor in the scene. This party the captain very soon became aware was no other than Mr. Reuben Reckless, his own Midshipman, whom he had left in charge of the cutter, with a strong injunction not to leave her. At the first impulse of angry feeling towards the young subaltern for thus disobeying his positive orders, the Skipper was about to break in upon the merry makers and walk off with the transgressor; but a second thought arrested his determination. He thought of his own wild pranks when he was himself a reefer, and recollected that this was the first time young Reckless had been left to act without a senior officer to control him. Captain D. was amused with what he saw, and continued to observe the playful party for a few minutes. We have stated our hero formed the second principal actor in the scene, and so he did, for the dog before named was the star on this occasion. The young reefer had placed his own coat and sword-belt upon the body of the animal, and then sticking his cocked hat upon its head, he christened the dog by the name of his own commander. There was the youth with his real reck-

less disposition for fun, and wearing a bonnet with the wrong side in front, waltzing with the dog which capered about on his hind legs, his tongue hanging loosely from his mouth, apparently as much amused with the sport as any that were present.

"Now then, young ladies," said Reuben, taking off the bonnet to fan himself, "we will have a fresh game. —Let us play at 'ships going into harbour,'—I will be the Royal Charles, and you will all please to remember that I am the admiral's ship, and a first-rate man-o'-war. Now Mister Dolphin you shall be the Sea Nymph frigate—and you, my little flaxen-hair, shall be a 'sloop-tender' to the Royal Charles: stop—no, that wont do, you are too fat and not active enough for a sloop; let me see, what can we make of you. What is your name?"

"Helen the fair," answered the little round-faced girl, in a mild tone of voice.

"Yes, Helen the fair, all the girls do declare—and the *boys* too sometimes," shouted the little dark eye.

"And what is your name, Miss sharp-wit," asked the Midshipman.

"Oh, as for me, I've a name as long as the main-brace of a seventy-four gun ship,—which will you have—my 'out-at-sea' name, or my 'go-ashore' name,—my Spanish or my English name, my—"

"Stop, stop! your 'go-ashore' name will do, Miss, what is that?"

"Then that is Caroline."

"That's just the name I want; you shall be the Royal Caroline and tender to the Flag ship, remember that if you please, and think of the honor. And you, my dear Helen, shall be Captain Dalrymple's guinea pig."

"If I were in your place, Caroline," said the little fair-hair, "I would demand—"

"Mr. Reckless," shouted Captain Dalrymple from behind the shrubbery.

"Sir," answered the reefer, turning very pale.

"Bow-wow! Bow-wow-wow!" vociferated Dolphin.

"Who was it that called my name just now?" asked the young gentleman, in a trembling tone; "I fancied I heard Captain Dalrymple's voice."

"So you did, Admiral," replied the little dark eye: "you heard the bow-wow-wow of my dog Dolphin there, who at present is personating your skipper you know as Captain of the Sea Nymph frigate."

"Ah! but I heard some one else call me by my name," said the youth, with a most seriously altered countenance.

"Give me my coat, hat, and sword belt, Dolphin. I must bear-a-hand and get to the cutter before *he* gets there, or I shall be in a pretty scrape."

"Mr. Reckless," again sung out Captain Dalrymple.

"Sir!—Dolph!—Dolph?" shouted the distressed boy after the dog, as the animal bounded off towards the shrubbery to oppose the near approach of a stranger advancing.

"Here—Dolphin—Dolphin—come here, sir!" in vain cried Reuben Reckless, as he followed the dog. "Lie down, sir! how dare you disobey my orders, you bad dog—come here, sir, directly, I say, Dolphin—Dolphin, how dare you disobey me, sir—down, sir!"

"How dare *you* disobey *me*, Mr. Reckless, and thus neglect your duty by leaving the cutter which I ordered you to remain with until I returned," said the Skipper, as soon as his Midshipman was near enough to hear him *speak in an under tone*.

"Oh! sir, I hope you will forgive me this time—I have done wrong, very, very wrong, Captain Dalrymple, I acknowledge I have," said the terror-stricken boy, trembling with conscious guilt.

"Have that mutinous Captain Dalrymple tried by a Court Martial for disobedience of orders, Admiral, and take the command of the Sea Nymph frigate away from him," shouted Caroline, who was acting as tender to the Flag ship, and who had just arrived in time to bear the young reefer pronounce his commander's name. Of course she alluded to the dog that was now being speedily stripped of his borrowed finery, for truly the '*tables were turned.*' The little girl looking up for the first time, fixed her eyes upon the form of the Post Captain; after viewing him a second or two she again scampered off to her companions exclaiming,

"Another playfellow! another playfellow!—we have got another playfellow come to join us—a right earnest and real Admiral this one is too I positively do believe.—Look, yonder he is walking with Master Reuben Reckless. Hey dey!" continued the girl, apparently disappointed at what she observed, "Why, how is this—they never can be going away without so much as saying good-bye. Well, I never—how very ungallant—did you ever, Helen—I did expect he would have come back again; if it were only to take leave of us; but it cannot be helped now, he's gone."

"Why that must be his Captain," observed one of the other girls, "Did you not perceive how frightened he seemed, Caroline, when he heard his name called,—oh, yes, it must be his Captain."

"Well, I do believe so too," answered the one addressed, "and probably he is angry with him for leav-

cipline on board. The Captain's appearance was anything but prepossessing, he being, as we have before remarked, a very sour visaged man ; still in his manners he was pleasing, and, in consequence thereof, both his officers and his men were much attached to him. Indeed, we know not of another school that will bear a comparison with our navy, for the close adherence that is observed by her officers while afloat to the laws of courtesy and etiquette. There are exceptions, we grant ; nevertheless, however severe a *martinet* a man may be in disposition, however great an eccentric in manner, let his station or rank be what it may, he is obliged to conduct himself with gentlemanly deportment towards his brethren in the service, or otherwise (thanks be to those who made our Articles of War) he is as subject to their code, provided he commit the slightest breach of good manners even towards a junior officer, as that junior officer himself would be were he to be proved guilty of disrespect to his superior. Captain D. continued his stately walk until four bells were struck ; then, approaching the spot where the lieutenant of the watch stood, he courteously saluted the latter by raising his fore finger to the tip of his cap.

Mr. Francis Cromwell Oliver, the third lieutenant of the *Sea Nymph* frigate, a very fine looking and open-hearted young man, of about three-and-twenty, was one of the branches of a numerous and aristocratic family, with high connexions both in and out of that service to which, on account of his talents, he was certainly an ornament—being not only a strict and skilful officer, devoted to his profession, but also an attached and sincere friend. The lieutenant returned the accustomed salute as he answered his commander, who thus addressed him :

"How does she keep her course, Mr. Oliver?"

"Very well, sir, until within the last half hour, when she fell off about half a point, and continues to yaw a little to lu-ard even now. Shall I alter the trim of the sails, Captain Dalrymple?"

"No, never mind, Oliver, she may come to again in awhile. Keep her full and by; and send one of the young gentlemen of the watch to request the master's attendance in my cabin. It is a splendid night, Oliver, is it not?" remarked the skipper as he descended the poop ladder on to the quarter deck.

"It is indeed, sir, a lovely night," answered the officer in charge.

"I almost envy you your watch, Mr. Oliver.

"You are quite welcome to take it instead of me, Captain Dalrymple," thought the lieutenant to himself.

"Good night, Oliver—good night," said the captain as he retired to his state cabin.

"Good night, sir," answered the lieutenant.

Mr. Sailwell, the Master of the Sea Nymph, having attended upon her Supreme, made his appearance on deck. He first ordered the course to be altered a little; then, after observing that the ship was in other respects made snug for the night, he passed the final orders of his commander to Mr. Oliver, and retired below.

The lieutenant being left entirely to himself, sole master of his own actions, and with all he looked upon subservient to his individual control, commenced his staid and monotonous tread athwart the break of the poop, which was now become sacred to him, and to him only. Most of the watch, save and except the men stationed at the wheel, the look-outs, and marines who kept sentry at their different posts, were *caulking* under

the lee of the booms or beside the guns, while those who were not so lethargically disposed, endeavoured to wile away the time by other means. On the fore-castle a select group were assembled, some sitting and some lying upon the deck with their heads resting upon their elbows, attentively listening to the marvellously embellished yarns of a favorite shipmate, who had the happy knack of inventing as he spun them. Among the stragglers on the outskirts of this group, stood a young man in uniform, with his arms folded on his chest, a smile on his face, and with his back reared against the fore-mast. This was the Master's Mate and officer in charge of the watch forward, beguiling the hour by lending an ear to the oft-told, but every time more wonderfully exaggerated yarns of Jack Nastyface, alias Munchausen Jack, the Captain of the Fore-castle.

In the weather quarterdeck hammock-nettings stood old Grant, conning the ship; and near to him sat Master Reuben Reckless, seemingly engaged in discussing a knotty argument with himself as to the proper method of laying across the strands of two rope ends for the purpose of joining them together by that most complicated of all splices, the long splice. Having made several vain attempts to accomplish his task, the youth at length appealed to his old friend, the quarter-master, to show him how it was to be done, at the same time promising the old man a glass of grog for his instruction when their watch was over. Grant took his eyes off the leach of the sail on which they had been for sometime fixed, then grumbling forth the order, "Sted-dee," to the man at the weather wheel, turned them with a goodnatured smile upon the young gentleman, and complied with his request, the latter evidently

having become a greater pet than ever in the eyes of the old seaman, in consequence of his manifesting such a desire to be made acquainted with the practical part of his profession. Many were the significant nods and winks of approbation which the preceptor bestowed upon his pupil, showing how apt was the scholar at his lesson.

"Avast there, Mister Reckless, that strand is laid foul: it must pass under and over, d'ye see. I'm arter thinking, sir, that I shall make a better sailor o' ye than ere a one o' your messmates yet—blow me upwards if I don't."

"Then you do ~~Not~~ consider me such a lubber, Joey, as Mister Strachan was when you first taught him to knot and splice, do you?" asked Reuben.

"Lord love ye, Mister Reckless, by no manner o' means wotsomdiver. No, sir, I niver seed nothing o' the lubber in you since I've knowed you. Mister Strachan—psha. Why, sir, though as how he be an oldster he arnt no more fit to hold the candle to yer honor in the matter o' splicing and the likes o' all that ere, no more nor I Joe Grant am fit for one o' them ere wot-you-may-caullum chaps ashore, as rigs himself in his shirt out'ards and then gets up into a kind o' box and overhauls the folks's consciences, spinning as long a yarn as would reach from the south seas to the north pole, on the coast o' Meriky. I recollect, sir, my old uncle, the parish schoolmaster, was a kind o' first lieutenant like to one o' them ere chaps, and used to sing out 'Avast,' or summut o' the kind, when he wanted him to clap a stopper on his jaw-tackle—for, d'ye see, the chap in the box aboveboard always used to knock off his yarn when my old uncle spoke to him: the bosan, when he

pipes 'belay,' is the most like it of anything I can think of. But what's the name the long shore folks calls this smooth-faced chap by wot wears his shirt over-all, I can't remember."

"A clergyman, I suppose you mean, Joey; and your old uncle, the parish schoolmaster, was his clerk, I presume."

"De-zactly so, Mister Reckless, that ere's the wery identical hanimal that I was deluding at, but having had as how so little to do, d'ye see, with them ere sort o' gentlemen, I couldn't hit o' the name. Cos why—I've niver been into a church since I was the height o' the little dwarf as was obleeged, mi'd ye, to stand on a biscuit to look a duck in the face. But, as I was before obsarving, d'ye see, sir, I'm arter thinking that nother Mister Strachan, nor ere a-one o' the other young genelman, aboard this ere frigate, is fit to be clapt alongside o' you, Mister Reckless, in the matter o' knotting and splicing—that's wot I'll take my davy of, sir, and I wenture to say you'll allow me to be a judge o' the like."

"Oh yes, Grant, I must allow you to be a judge of splicing, because you praise mine so very much; but I'm arter thinking, as you say, old fellow, that it's more on account of your having taught me the art than because my attempts merit the commendation—eh, Joey eh!" observed the youth, with an ironical leer in the old man's face.

"Well but, sir, joking aside, indeed it's a werry smart splice is that ere last o' yourn, and to say it is only the handy craft of a youngster like yourself; I must obsarve that there be's a deal o' decouragement due to ye for it, Mister Reckless."

"Come, come, old boy, let's have no more of your gammon, for it wont do you know—I can see through it, Joey."

"See through wot, sir—axing yer pardon."

"Why, Grant, I know very well—all that palaver of yours means grog—G—R—O—G, grog, old boy—and that is what it means. Now, tell me, Joey, am I not right—come, say it is as I suspect and then I'll be an extra glass in your debt for letting out the secret."

"Thise, boy—thise!—mind yer weather hel-em, Saunders—sted-dee so!" sung out the old man, attending to the duties of his post; then again addressing the midshipman, added: "Well, now raelly, Mister Reckless, I niver seed the likes o' yer honor's cuteness. Why, I'll take my davy, sir, that you must o' transmogrified yourself right plump into my werry wytals and there o' read my werry idintical thoughts. As sure as my name's Laughing Joey, I was arter thinking o' '*splicing the main-brace*'* with your leave, sir, when our watch is over." As the quarter-master said these words, he got down from the hammock nettings and turned the sand in the thirty minute glass, then went to the fore part of the ship and struck the bell, thereby announcing the hour of the night to all on board. When the cunning old man had returned aft and taken his post again, he thrust his hand beneath his hat and commenced scratching his head, muttering to himself as he did so, in a voice sufficiently audible for the young reefer to hear him—

"Well, bless my stars—what a wonderful diskiversion and cliverness the young gentleman is possessed of,

* An expression used on board of ship signifying the same as drinking a glass of grog on shore.

sure-ly! All that palaver o' mine, as he calls it, did mean grog, most sartinly it did, and I wont deny it—but I hope he'll not forget his promise when the watch is over. Mister Strachan—psha! he arnt fit to row in the same boat with Mister Reckless: for raelly the youngster reefer's cuteness at taking one's senses is unkimmon, that it is, perfectly unkimmon."

At this moment Mr. Oliver's voice, singing out for the young gentlemen of the watch, put a stop to any furthy colloquy between the quartermaster and the midshipman.

"Young gentlemen!" again shouted the lieutenant; "where have you young gentlemen stowed yourselves? Off deck as usual, young gentlemen!"

"Sir!" answered our hero, springing aft.

"Oh! is that you, Mr. Reckless—what, have you been asleep, sir? Send the afterguard here, and clap them on the lee braces. Bear a hand, sir; and don't let me have to tell you of sleeping on your watch again for the next six months at least."

"Rouse up here—rouse up, men. Afterguard, aft to the lee braces—lee braces, men—lee braces, all of you—stretch the falls along the deck." Such were the midshipman's shrill notes, which soon became inaudible amidst the more hoarse voices of the men as they braced the yards sharper up to the wind.

"Belay—there, belay all that. Coil away the falls again, and go forrard, men."

In obedience to the last order of the lieutenant, the quarterdeck was soon as quiet and clear of men as it was before the bustle had commenced, which the performance of this necessary little duty occasioned.

"You'll not forget that last splice, I hope, Mister

Reckless, which I took the liberty o' naming to yer honor," said old Grant to our hero, as the latter was passing him.

"What, the long splice do you mean Joey?" asked the youth, with a wicked look, which signified that he knew very well what splice the old seaman alluded to.

"No, sir, not the long splice, but the '*main-brace splice*' is what I mean—axing yer honor's pardon for making so bold," said Grant, accompanying the answer with a tip of his hat.

"Oh, that's what you mean, old fellow, is it. Well, well, I'll see to it at eight bells; you shall have a regular *sou-wester*, Joey, then, that you shall, for you deserve it."

"Thank yer honor—thank you Mister Reckless."

"Thank me when you get it, Grant; you know there's many a slip 'tween cup and lip, they say, old boy."

"Ay, ay, sir,—werry good obseruation that. Bless the young gentleman—why his wit is sharp enough to clean shave the Pope o' Rome. His cuteness is unkimmon, that it is—*partic'ler unkimmon!*" muttered the old quartermaster, as the reefer left him to join one of his messmates who was standing in the waist of the vessel, and between whom and our hero a strong friendship existed, they both having joined the frigate at the same time, both too belonging to the same watch, of much the same temper, partial to the same pursuits, and both being youngsters of nearly the same age.

Most of our readers, we presume, have heard talk of "Saturday Night at Sea," when '*sweethearts and wives are drunk righte merrylie.*' This being the last night in the week, the ward-room officers were having a

carouse in their mess-birth below. The midshipman of the morning watch, the surgeon's assistant, and the captain's clerk were present at their table as guests. The social bowl and lively toast went round ; many a tough yarn was spun by the senior, and many a sentimental ditty was warbled forth by the junior members of the mess. Little did the revellers think, in the hilarity of their spirits, that before many more weeks or days, nay, even hours, had fled over their heads, the gayest of the gay, the most lively of them all, possessed then of beauty, health, and strength, with every prospect of life smiling upon him, might be cropt in the bud, and sent to '*that bourn from whence no traveller returns.*' There was one individual of the party who particularly struck our attention, and this was the junior lieutenant of marines. He appeared to be young, of easy and gentlemanly manners, of rather intellectual features, and with a voice, such an one as when once heard can never be forgotten, for its melody and sweetness, together with the masterly style in which its owner made it subservient to his will, surpassed all vocal performances we ever recollect to have heard. From the pathos and effect thrown into each song by the performer, we conceived him to be possessed of a mind overflowing with poesy and romance. What made the last party still more interesting to the stranger was the sight of a piece of black crape stitched around the small of his left arm : this, we were informed, was an emblem of mourning for the departed sire of the young lady to whom he was engaged. Conviviality continued to be the order of the evening, and it was kept up with great glee until the deep-toned bell in the fore part of the frigate struck seven, announcing to those of the party whose duty it

would be to take the middle watch, that it was time for them to prepare for the same; also reminding the others whose duty it would be to relieve the latter at 4 A.M. the next morning, that a few hours sleep would be desirable. After these had retired to their separate berths, the doctor, the purser, with a few other civilians and *idlers*,* carried on their revels until it pleased the first-lieutenant to give the party a hint (which is generally considered by all as tantamount to an order) that they should also knock off from their midnight orgies,—douse the glim, and turn in. During this carouse below, we have to request our readers will once more accompany us on deck.

There a handsome youth stood leaning over the weather gangway. It was just the kind of night to inspire any one with a love for the sea, and to reconcile those to their lot who at first espoused the nautical profession from choice, and afterwards became obliged to adhere to it from necessity, as was the case with the young gentleman before us. The ocean was calm, and thousands of stars which burnt brightly above, were mirrored more bright in the bosom of the waters. How numerous would be her votaries, were she always to be viewed in the same brilliant state as she on this night appeared.

John Boyson was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow in reduced circumstances. The Sea Nymph having been away on several long cruizes at different times, had not received her letters from England very regularly, which accounts for young Boyson

* A term applied to all parties on board of ship who keep no watch and sleep in all night, except when in cases of emergency "all hands are called."

only having heard of his father's death about three months previous, the event having taken place nearly half a year before the melancholy intelligence reached him. What rendered the news of Mr. Boyson's death still more distressing to his son, was the knowledge that the former had died of a broken heart in consequence of the failure of some extensive speculation abroad, which had removed him from the pinnacle of wealth to the lowest state of poverty and destitution. The rich merchant had become a totally ruined man. The circumstances of the widow's *accouchement* taking place soon after her husband's death, together with the esteem and condolence that was felt for the family by a numerous and wealthy circle of acquaintance, caused such a general sympathy publicly to be felt throughout the town where they resided, that speedily a very handsome subscription was raised for them. From the income of this, added to the emolument to be derived from the future industry of her eldest daughter, Matilda, who had just entered her seventeenth year, Mrs. Boyson hoped to be able to live comfortably at least, if not fashionably, as she had been wont to do. Her son she considered provided for by the profession he had himself embraced; and his elder sister she valued as one who was not deficient either in personal attractions or amiability of disposition to command an advantageous matrimonial alliance when she should arrive at years of maturity. Her next daughter, Emily, two years the son's junior, was a great acquisition to the bereaved widow; while her infant, Ada, helped to occupy her mind and to keep her from brooding over her affliction by the necessary care and attention which it constantly required, not only serving as an employment, but also forming a pleasant

duty, which few parents situated under similar circumstances would like to see performed by a stranger.

The young midshipman's thoughts were diverted to his home, that home as it was when he bade adieu to it. His wandering imagination soared across the thousands of miles that intervened between himself and those dear beings who then formed its inhabitants. But now, alas ! strangers trod within the hall of his father, and its walls no longer echoed the voices of his own fond relatives. He thought of his mother, that dearest of human beings, to whom he owed his existence, and of his most affectionately beloved sisters. He saw them in his mind, with the cheerful smile of happiness beaming on their faces as it was wont to do when he last associated with them. How his dear Matilda's eyes would have sparkled with delight to have been by his side, and to have viewed the same glittering scene which he himself then looked upon ; how her warm maiden heart would have throbbed with the tenderest emotions to have listened to that musical and plaintive voice by which his own ears were then charmed ; how his equally beloved, but more volatile Emily's tongue would have joined its small and trembling cadences to the sound thereof. And what, he then thought, are those sweet sisters now ? what that fondest of mothers ?—the former were fatherless and unprotected girls, the latter was a lone and sere-hearted widow. And what, he thought, was he himself ?—not the heir to wealth as he once was, but, on the contrary, a poor and friendless midshipman, roaming in a distant foreign sea, and with nothing but his profession to depend upon for his future worldly support. The youth at length thought solely of his father's death, and sighed deeply—again he sighed : but the last sigh was converted

into a regular groan by a smart slap on the back given by young Reckless, who at that moment accosted him.

"What will you take for your thoughts, Jack? Why, bless me, you look as serious as the ship's cook does when the saucy Sea Nymph ships a sea that washes his galley fire out!"

"If my thoughts were not worth more than what you will give for them, Reuben, they would be valueless indeed," answered young Boyson, throwing off the sentimental, and assuming his usual sprightliness of manner.

"I'll wager my best go-ashore coat, Jack, against your old flushing jacket, that I guess what you've been brooding over for the last two bells."

"Done say I to that, Reuben, tip me your fin, my spark, and it shall be a bet."

"Well, but if I lose, Jack, remember I don't forfeit, as there is a running account between you and me you know in that line."

"Oh, you are always sheering off on that tack, Reuben, when you find yourself running into shoal water; but never mind, I don't care, have it your own way.— Well, now then tell me if you can what my thoughts have been about for the last hour of the watch."

"Why you have been racking your fertile genius to hatch some mischievous trick, which you intend playing upon old Physic-Bottle for his reporting our last night's skylark to '*Treadmill-Bob*.'* I know that is it, Jack, by your smile; and another thing I know very well, that you will want me to lend you a hand to carry

* A nickname by which Mr. Rouseabout, the first lieutenant of the Sea Nymph, had been christened, on account of the particular assiduity and strictness with which he performed the duties of his office in keeping up good discipline on board.

your plans into execution, which you are well aware I am ever ready to do.—Now tell me, Mister John Boyson, am I not right in my guess the first?”

“No, Mister Reuben Reckless, indeed you are not; I was thinking of something much more serious than the revenging a trifling offence upon that mean spirited man, Mr. Galen.”

“Much more serious say you,—why, perhaps then, Jack, you were contriving it in your mind how we might commit piracy upon old Crabs’s hencoops in our next morning watch.”

“Wrong again,—more serious still Reuben.”

“Did you think of cutting Harvey’s hammock down by the head, if he does not come up on deck to relieve you to night before one bell?”

“No, even more serious than that, old fellow, were my thoughts when you so ungraciously interrupted them.”

“More serious yet, Jack, well then I’ll guess no more.”

“Guess again, just once more, Reuben.”

“No, I’ll give it up.”

“Come then I’ll tell you.”

“Well, let’s hear, Jack—carry on—bear a hand.”

“I was thinking for one thing, what a sweet melodious voice my cousin Whitfield has.”

“Whew, was that all, Jack, why I’ve heard hundreds as sweet, as Munchausen Jack said the other night when the bo-sun pointed out the comet to him,—thinking it only looked like any other bright star, Nastyface sung out, ‘Well blow me, if ye call that a comet, Mister Junk, I’ve done, for I’ve seen hundreds o’ that ’ere sort in my time.’”

“But you cannot be so wanting of taste, Reuben, as

to call Mr. Whitfields's voice a common one.—Did you not think the last song he gave them below was an incomparable performance ? ”

“ I never learnt music, Jack, and therefore don't understand the merits of your cousin's singing. If he had been blowing a bo-sun's call I might have been able to pass a tolerable opinion upon the performance.”

“ Particularly if it had been a pipe to dinner, Reuben, eh.”

“ De-zactly, as old Grant says, or a pipe to grog, I think we all understand that, Jack, pretty well. But you have not yet told me what else you were thinking of so serious like.”

“ I was thinking also, Reuben, of my poor widowed mother and fatherless sisters, and how very much they would like to have heard that song, for it would have reminded their desolate hearts of happier days.”

“ Then it must have been that which made you look so gravely into the water.”

“ Yes, Reuben, I was lamenting their loss.”

“ Well, well, never mind John, cheer up — these things we are all subject to—try to forget it, old fellow” said our hero in the most kind manner, endeavouring to drive away the melancholy thoughts that obtruded into the mind of his friend.

“ Every one is not possessed of such an easy disposition as you are, Reuben, I wish I was, it would save me many a severe pang.”

“ Well, to be sure if I were to give way, Jack, to the ‘ mumble-come-jumble-me,’ I might fancy myself a deal worse off than you are ; for d'ye see, thanks be to somebody, I am fatherless, motherless, brotherless, sisterless, dogless, and chickenless, without a soul to care for me

or that I should care for, and if we draw a comparison I do positively think I am the best off of the two."

"There is an old saying, Reuben, that the back is generally formed for the burthen, and it is perhaps as well for you that you have such a light heart as enables you to think so."

"Why you know my old favourite ditty, Jack, which says—

I care for nobody—my name is Joe Etches,
And a true British Sailor I'll be,
I have a light heart and a thin pair o' breeches,
And there is nobody cares for me.
My heart it is light, and my breeches are thin—"

"Yes, by Jupiter, thin enough in all conscience,—why, Reuben, look here, how's this?" asked young Boyson, at the same time seizing hold of a piece of the other's shirt which had made its appearance through a large rent in his trowsers behind.

"Zounds, Jack! avast hauling, or you'll drag my whole body through the slit as well as my shirt.—Why I must have torn that gap in my hurry to get out of the hammock nettings when Mr. Oliver was singing out so lustily for one of us a short while ago to rouse those lazy scoundrels the afterguard. Why did not you answer the hail, Jack, it was waiting for you doing so, which prevented me answering him the first time he sung out;—I thought you would have answered, Jack, seeing that I was engaged with Laughing Joey, who was giving me a lesson on splicing."

"Upon my honor, Reuben, if you will believe me, I never heard Mr. Oliver's voice, neither did I know that the afterguard had been roused to perform any duty

whatever, my mind just then was so completely buried in the subject of my thoughts."

"No, not hear Mr. Oliver sing out, "Young Gentlemen?"—Why, Jack, he actually blustered just for all the world like a grampus smarting under the chastisement of the thrasher: I was afraid the Admiral at Jamaica might be hearing him, so I was obliged to answer."

"Well, *I* never heard him," answered young Boyson.

"Why then that must have been the time, Jack, when you were expecting to see the forms of your mother and sisters make their appearance from the depths of the sea, was it so?"

"No! indeed, Reckless, I had no such foolish idea."

"Well, well, be that as it may, my boy, I care not, my song being now all the more applicable to myself, I'll e'en finish the verse—so here's strike off—

My heart it is light, and my breeches are thin,
Yet a true British Sailor I'll be;
When I hold up the grog-can with pleasure I grin,
While I drink to our tars on the sea.
There's nobody cares for me,
So a Jack Tar I will be;
I care for nobody,
I care for nobody,
And there is nobody cares for me, &c., &c.

"You are merrier than usual to night, Reuben," observed our hero's watchmate, when the reefer had finished his stave.

"Yes, my boy, it does not require much discrimination to perceive that I generally grow merrier as my watch draws nearer to a close, and I see there is old Grant coming to report eight bells now, so I must go

below to give the officers a light, and to rouse-out our messmates to relieve us."

"Make that lazy fellow, Harvey, turn out of his hammock before you leave him, and tell him to bear a-hand on deck, will you be so kind, Reckless, there's a good fellow, do. I declare it is too bad of Harvey, he did not come up to relieve me last night until nearly one bell, and I'm dashed if I wont cut him down by the run if he serves me so again."

"Oh, you shall not have that trouble, Jack, only say the word—be squat you know—and I will do the job for you if he does not show a leg by such time as old Strachan relieves me."

As he said these words off scampered the volatile and light-hearted young Midshipman to the poop, and reported to Mr. Oliver that it was twelve o'clock. The latter gave the order for eight bells to be struck and the larboard-watch to be called. Master Reuben dived below with the intention of not making his appearance again on deck until eight o'clock the next morning, when it would be his turn to keep watch once more. But our hero was disappointed as the result of this chapter will show.

On the larboard side of the frigate's lower or orlop deck, nearly abeam with her mizen-mast, was a door which opened into an oblong fore and aft cabin, surrounded on three of its sides by lockers, which formed seats; while on that side where the door was, a few carpet stools upset in all forms, and with their legs where their heads should be, were to be seen. The wainscoating, of this dingy berth was hung round with divers articles of wearing apparel and scientific instruments: such as uniform jackets and caps; rough weather coats; dirks, swords,

and sword-belts; cocked hats; quadrants, telescopes, fowling pieces, and pistols; violins, and a variety of other things too numerous to mention. The strong smell of smoking, and the profusion of half-consumed cigars revelling amidst their own ashes, together with stray packs of cards intermixed with pieces of broken biscuits, cribbage boards, empty bottles, greasy music books, amputated flutes, and sundry other indications of a late jollification, which were to be observed on entering to be scattered upon the table, sufficiently manifested that the young gentlemen of the Sea Nymph, whose mess cabin this was, had also been keeping up Saturday night at sea as well as their brother officers on the deck above them.

On opposite sides of the table near the centre of this cabin sat Messrs. Reckless and Boyson. These two young reefers seemed to be very busily engaged demolishing the remains of a piece of salt junk which had formed the principal viand on which the mess had the day previous dined. In lieu of better plates each had placed his piece of meat on the top of a biscuit and with their pocket knives sliced away at it with all the elegance and style of lads before the mast.—Each had by his side a cocoa nut shell of his own particular manufacture, scooped out into the form of a drinking cup, and marked with their initials. The two appeared much amused while this tuck-out lasted by something they had recently been engaged in, for occasional bursts of laughter proceeded from both.

“We gave Harvey a good one to night, Jack, did we not?” commenced our hero when his mouth was sufficiently empty to allow him to speak—“Ah! ah! ah! —Oh, my—what a crack he came down with.”

"Yes," answered young Boyson, "I'm of opinion that he will have a soft place on his head after that if he never had one before. But it serves him right, he should turn out when he's roused the same as you and I do. I hope the lesson we have given him to-night will make him in future use others as he would like to be used himself."

"I hope it will have that effect upon him, Jack, for your sake; but here my boy, hand your shell over, let's pour you out a little more grog, you have scarcely had any yet, and you know I've given old Grant nearly all my share of it.—Drink, Jack, drink."

"Help yourself, Reuben, we'll each of us take our wack while there is any left in the bottle."

"I don't much care about having any more of that rank Barbadoes rum to-night, Jack, so messmate you may take the rest all to yourself. For my own drinking I would prefer a bottle of black strap out of old Crabs's stores if I could come at it any way—honestly you know,—you understand the last three words, Jack,—honestly you know, eh."

"Yes, yes, I know what you mean, Reuben, I'm fly to it. Well, now I'll tell you something."

"Let's have it then,—what have you to tell me, Jack?"

"Why, as I passed the pantry door just now when I came down off deck, I observed the key to be left in the key-hole.—The Captain's steward must be turned in before this time, and you may depend upon it he has forgot to take it out."

"By jingo, then I'll be off directly, Jack, on a voyage of discovery, a little privateering in that line comes within the limits of the term *honestly* you know.—Squat, Jack, be squat."

"Squat I'll be, my boy, you may depend, so carry on, bear a-hand."

Young Reckless immediately went to the Captain's private pantry, and after pocketing the key which he had found as his messmate had stated, and which he thought to himself might be useful at some future time, stole in. He tasted of various bottles that were on the shelves; but as some contained pickles, others ketchups, and none the article he was in quest of; he was about to give up the search for that time, when he heard footsteps descending the aftermost or companion hatchway. The youngster seized hold of another quart stone bottle which stood near him with the cork half drawn, tasted it, spit it out again, and then bolted out of the store room. In his haste to escape detection our hero run violently against and nearly upset the individual whom he had heard coming down the ladder off deck. He looked in the party's face and observed it was Mr. Strachan, the caterer of the mess to which he himself belonged, who had just stepped below for his pea jacket, finding the night air to be rather cool after leaving his warm and comfortable hammock.

Mr. Alexander Strachan, a surly north countryman, of nearly twenty years of age, was what is called an oldster in the mess of which he was the senior member. Like many other unfortunate beings of that class in the service, who possess neither wealth nor interest, he still remained a young gentleman, although he had served his six years in that capacity. This might partly be attributed to his own neglect, for so ignorant was he of the theoretical part of his profession when he presented himself to his betters for examination, that they rejected him with a severe censure for that want of nautical

learning, which at every answer he made to their questionings, he so obviously manifested. With a temper naturally irritable, but rendered still more morose in consequence of this disappointment, Mr. Strachan again went to sea for a probationary time, that he might thereby improve himself sufficiently to undergo a second examination with better success than what he experienced upon his first trial.

"Hoot-awa, mon! what the deil are ye at, running foul o' one after that fashion for? Ken ye not that ye've knock'd muckle wind out o' my body? ² Who the deil are ye, lod?" asked the oldster when our hero ran against him.

"It's only me, Mister Strachan," answered the latter, when the two had arrived at the door of their own mess-cabin. "I thought it was Mr. Rouseabout who was coming down the companion hatch, so I was in a hurry to get below."

"And what the deil, lod, haster got under th' arm? What, you've been on one of your privateering cruizes, I ken, Master Leetlebreeches!"

"It is a bottle of old Crabs's Best London, alias Barclay and Perkin's brown stout, treble X, Mister Strachan; will you take a swigg? I know it is a favourite beverage with you."

"Think thee, lod," said Sandy, taking the proffered bottle from our hero, who winked at young Boyson. "Yer poleeteness to neeght is oure gracious Master Reub—"

"Oh, don't stand upon ceremony, Master Strachan, help yourself; drink it all if you like, I can soon fetch another bottle, there is plenty more where that came from. Don't be shy, have a good swigg. Age before

honesty you know, Jack ; it shall be your turn next if Mr. Strachan leaves any in the bottle," said our hero, addressing the last sentence to his watchmate, who returned the wicked wink the former gave him with one equally as mischievous, signifying that he perfectly understood the other's meaning.

The senior midshipman placed the bottle to his mouth and greedily gulped down two or three swallows of the liquid it contained. Suddenly he ceased to drink, and and spluttered out a mouthful of dark coloured fluid on the deck, growling at each separate attempt to clean his tongue from the same, the out-witted Scotchman at last exclaimed —

"Zounds, lod!—why, its blacking the bottle has in it!"

"Well, now that's very strange, Mister Strachan, that your taste and mine should be so very similar, for, do you know, I thought it was blacking when I smelt of it," said young Reckless, with a demure look, while the other, beginning to suspect the trick played upon him, seized our hero by the collar, and gnashing his teeth with passion, bellowed out—

"Then why the de'il didna ye tell me that before, if ye ken'd it as you say ye did?"

"Because I wished to have your opinion, Mister Strachan, knowing you to be a judge of the article, that was all."

"I'll opinion ye, you infernal young scamp!" said the aggrieved, at the same time making preparations to force some of what remained in the bottle down the throat of the youngster.

"Avast! avast! Mister Strachan, and I will tell you something."

"Well, bear a-hand,—what have ye to tell?"

"Why I misread the label on the bottle: instead of being Barclay and Perkin's '*brown stout*,' it must be Day and Martin's '*jet black*,' I think—just look, will you, before you punish me unjustly."

"Yes, black enough," remarked the other as he loosed hold of his victim to view his own hands, at which time the youth stole out of his reach. "If my inside is as black as my hands, there's oure muckle more black there than will be wanted, I trow."

"You must swallow the brushes now, Mister Strachan, and they will polish your inside without further trouble?" observed young Boyson, who hitherto had not been able to make any remark on the scene he had witnessed for laughing.

"And even then his inside will only match his face, and not be half so black as the heart it contains. Stop, I think there's a piece of sponge in the locker here, I'll tie a piece of string to it, then Mister Strachan can swallow it, Jack, and you can draw it up his throat again, by which novel kind of stomach-pump you may perhaps get up part of the blacking he has gulped down—capital contrivance, I can assure you; look out, Jack, there it is; just endeavour to persuade Sandy to try it," said our hero, at the same time, in the most tantalising manner, throwing across the table a large piece of sponge with a string attached to it.

At this moment the quartermaster of the watch made his appearance at the door of the mess cabin with a message from the lieutenant in charge to request Mister Strachan's attendance on deck.

"Take that, you infernal young scamp! I'll serve ye out, lod, for this yet, bide my time," said the infuriated midshipman, throwing the stone blacking bottle at the

head of the youngster without effect as he departed from the cabin.

"Why you are quite black in the face with passion, Sandy. Capital miss that, old Blowporridge. Hugh! hugh! hugh! Goodbye, old heave short—you'll remember treble X—done you brown this time, Sandy! Who blessed the Duke of Argyle, Sandy!—old Never-sweat! old Spit-to-windward!" sung out young Reckless, who after jumping over the table at a spring had followed his senior messmate to the bottom of the ladder leading on deck.

"Well, my spark, I shall turn in now; I think you have paid off Sandy pretty well for what he did to you yesterday; serves him quite right, he should not try to come the officer so much over us youngsters," observed young Boyson to our hero when the latter returned to the cabin.

"And I think I may venture now to turn in likewise, Jack, what think you?"

"Why I see no reason that you should not, Reub, any more than myself, for if Sandy comes below to take revenge by cutting one of us down, he's sure to serve the other with the same sauce."

"Oh, I don't mean for fear of Sandy, he's had enough of us to-night I'll warrant; but I mean, suppose *Noll** should remember old Treadmill-Bob's orders, which he seems to have forgot, and rouse me out again. It would not be pleasant you know after I had got cozily into my hammock to be lugged on deck again."

"You are right, Reuben, indeed it would not, and I can hear Mr. Oliver's footstep overhead, which tells that

* Old Noll—a nickname of Oliver Cromwell's, after whom Mr. Oliver had been christened.

he has not turned in yet. Hark ! Reuben, he is opening his door, you know that is his cabin just above this."

"I hear it," answered our hero, then as if chuckling to himself, added, "But I can't help thinking I have done old Treadmill Bob to-night at all events."

"Don't crow to soon, my spark, you know, Reuben, it is a wise cock that keeps his bill closed untill his adversary is dead."

At this period of their discourse a gentle rap at the door outside the cabin put a stop to any further conversation between the two midshipman. On the party being requested to come in, the door opened, and Mr. Oliver thrust in his head and thus addressed our hero,

"Have you forgot, Mr. Reckless, that you were to keep an extra watch to-night ?"

"No, sir," answered Reuben, "I have not forgot, but I was in hopes *you* had, Mr. Oliver, and the order was not addressed to me if I recollect right. Mr. Rouseabout said you, sir, were to pass it on to the officer that relieved you on deck ; but as I have not been sent for before, and it being my first offence of the kind, I was in hopes he had countermanded it and I was to be forgiven."

"Such would undoubtedly have been the case, young gentleman, if your messmate, Mr. Strachan, had not reminded me of that part of my orders which I most certainly had forgot, and if your abominable noise just now in this cabin had not almost distracted me. I'll thank you, Mr. Boyson, to knock off skylarking and turn in immediately ; and you, Mr. Reckless, will please to walk on deck ; give my compliments to Mr. Simpson, the lieutenant in charge of the watch, and tell him that he is to keep you on deck until the morning watch is

called, by Mr. Rouseabout's orders, as a punishment for leaving the cutter at St. Vincent's."

"Thank you, sir," drily said our hero, as he once more rigged himself in his flushing jacket and trowsers, and went on deck to suffer the four hours penance that was laid upon him.

At daylight a large ship was descried on the horizon to windward of the *Sea Nymph*. Captain Dalrymple was called, who by the aid of his telescope was enabled to perceive that the stranger by her rig and the cut of her sails was an enemy's ship. He immediately sent for Mr. Sailwell, the master of the frigate, and ordered him to alter the course and the trim of the sails, so that the *Sea Nymph* might follow as near as possible in the wake of the stranger. After a two hours run the vessels were near enough to observe each other's colors, when the commander of the French ship evidently wishing to avoid an engagement, made all sail to keep away from the English Frigate, the latter crowding all sail in chase. Both ships appeared to be of about equal speed on all points of sailing, and in consequence thereof the chase was kept up with great perseverance by Captain Dalrymple for several days, during which time he once lost sight of his adversary altogether, she having changed her course in the night, which was cloudy, and the atmosphere rather hazy, but when she hove in sight again, that being the case the day but one following, the chase was once more continued with renewed vigour,—the one commander being determined to bring his enemy into action, and the other manifesting a strong inclination, either from private motives, or on account of his orders being to that effect, to avoid it altogether. Leaving the two vessels in the position we have already described, we will now draw this chapter to a close.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ENGAGEMENT.

O Love! O Glory! what are ye who fly
 Around us ever, rarely to alight?
 But here are men who fought in gallant actions,
 As gallantly as ever heroes fought,
 But buried in the heap of such transactions
 Their names are rarely found, nor often sought.—
 Thus even good fame may suffer sad contractions,
 And is extinguished sooner than she ought:
 Of all our modern battles I will bet
 You can't repeat nine names from each gazette.

BYRON.

“ON blood and thunder! and, oh blood and wounds!
 —these are but vulgar oaths, as you may deem too,
 gentle reader, and most shocking sounds!— and so they
 are;—yet thus is Glory's dream, unriddled.”—Such were
 the words of that bard from whom we have borrowed
 the quotations at the head of our present chapter; and,
 alas! long ere this, many thousand victims have proved
 them to be too true, by having sacrificed their lives at
 her shrine. But, without further preface, we will at
 once resume our story.—Not many nights after the one
 referred to in our last chapter, and not many leagues
 from the track on which the frigate then sailed, the briny
 element was again illuminated far and wide. But on
 this night the coruscation did not proceed from a celestial
 body, for the moon had concealed herself behind a cloud,
 scorning to shine forth in rivalry with the red fierce
 glare produced from man's invention; and the scene of

which we are about attempting to give a description, would have been veiled in night, had it not been for the blaze from the angry cannon's mouth, "which rested upon the horizon like a long arched line of fiery cloud,"* and disclosed to view two armed vessels hotly engaged in mortal combat.

From the tattered condition of the sails, some of which hung from their yards in ribbons, while others were full of rents and shot holes, and the wreck-like appearance which the rigging of both ships exhibited, the contest might have been supposed to have lasted already for several hours, but will our readers credit the assertion when we state, that scarcely half an hour before, each vessel was perfect in her equipment and beautiful to look at. Such is the speedy demolition to be wrought without either one or the other having gained a visible advantage, when an equality of bravery, coolness, and skill are to be met with on board adverse ships of war.

This was the case in the present conflict. The commanders of both vessels were not only talented men of undoubted intrepidity, but also of scientific knowledge and discernment in everything that appertained to the profession of which they were such valuable members. Every advantageous manœuvre that was attempted to be put into practice by the one, its intent was immediately seen through as well as its success counteracted by the quick-sightedness and decision of the other; if the one gained a partial advantage, the other was sure soon after to make some fortunate attack, the successful result of which was evidently equivalent thereto; fortune seemed to smile and frown alternately upon both, and yet this

* Which arched the horizon like a fiery cloud.

Byron's Don Juan.

would not have been supposed at the commencement of the fight, for one ship not only appeared larger than the other, but was also manned with a more numerous complement.

Broadside after broadside continued to be blazed forth, lulling the breeze to stillness with the sound thereof, while loud peal after peal went booming along the quiet water and struck upon the ear with thundrous din. At length a sudden and exhilarating shout of joy announced that some spar or boom of the larger ship was shot away, which shout was at almost the same instant answered by another from more numerous mouths, exulting as they observed the mizen-topmast of the smaller one with all its gear and rigging, first to stagger, then to topple over and fall into the sea. At last in consequence of the disabled state of the guns, which both ships alike began to feel, the broadsides became weaker and weaker, until, as if by mutual consent, they hauled their wind on opposite tacks, fired one more round at each other as a sort of parting signal of defiance, and then stood away apparently disposed to desist from the contest for a short while, that the damages each had sustained might be in some measure repaired. At this period of the engagement the moon deigned to peep from her obscurity and to lend her welcome aid to the combatants for the short while they remained at peace. We will just take a general survey of and make a few partial observations on the scene which her yellow light disclosed to our gaze.

The larger of the two adverse vessels, by the white flag at her main, we perceive was a second-rate French man-of-war; while the other, by the union-jack at her fore, and old red British ensign at her mizen-peak, we

soon recognize to be our own dashing frigate the saucy Sea Nymph. What a picture of horror and carnage did the decks of both present. There were in heaps the mangled corpses of many a brave seaman laid low ;—there were to be seen scattered the black and mutilated limbs of beardless youth and grizzled age—there were to be heard the groans of the dying, intermingled with the piercing cries and heart-thrilling lamentations of the wounded and athirst,—there was to be inhaled the sulphurous and stifling odour of discharged gunpowder—there was to be viewed and inwardly felt the fatal consequence of human pride in its most sickening and disgusting form. Oh war, how direful are thy concomitants!—Oh, that we could erase from the tablet of our memory for ever the awful and innumerable instances of sudden death which thou hast caused to thousands of thy victims, who have been cut off in the midst of their unrepented sins, totally unprepared for that great change awaiting them in the unknown world to come. Oh, that we could for ever bury in oblivion that scene which recollection, (alas, in this much too faithful,) now brings home again to our mind, the pangs of soul, the bodily tortures, the mental imbecilities, and the thousands of other disasters which humanity has been subject to through thee, the families that have been rendered comfortless, by thy scourge, their ruin,—desolation and anguish inexpressible ;—the blighted hearts and affections seared in the bud, that thou hast required for thy sustenance—the husbandless widows, bereaved mothers and fatherless children that thou hast made, together with all the other incalculable evils attendant in thy train. Oh, that we could but think on glory and forget the price whereby it was obtained. But let us leave off *soliloquy* and return to our story.

All able hands were on the alert; activity and bustle prevailed on board both vessels, for the result of the engagement now depended entirely upon the alacrity with which each commander could prepare his ship for a renewal of the action. There were to be seen the carpenters and their mates busily engaged repairing the injured masts, spars and booms,—there were the boatswains and their mates re-splicing and re-reeving new rigging—there were the sailmakers at the sails, and the gunner with his crew preparing the carronades,—cutlasses, tomahawks, boarding pikes, and small arms; while others were to be seen washing the blood-stained decks, throwing overboard the dead, and carrying the wounded down below, to await their turn for the surgeon and his assistants to attend to them. Captain Dalrymple and his first lieutenant Mr. Rouseabout, were particularly busy actors in this scene of excitement, both superintending in person the proceedings that were being carried on; the latter was slightly wounded in the left arm. These two were conversing together on the quarterdeck, when the inanimate body of the young lieutenant of marines, whom we have already mentioned, was carried past them on the shoulders of four stalwart men belonging to his own corps; his private servant held up the head of his severely wounded master, as the party slowly and with careful steps descended the ladder leading to the cockpit.

“Ah! there goes poor Whitfield, I much fear his will prove a mortal wound, Rouseabout,” observed Capt. Dalrymple to his first lieutenant.

“Did you see him fall, sir?” asked the latter.

“Yes, I did, poor fellow, and was very near to him. He had just given the order for his men to fire, when a

splinter torn by a chain-shot from the bulwark near to where he stood, struck him in the groin and protruded itself from the small of his back. I immediately went up to him, but he suffered such dreadful agony when he was attempted to be moved, that I ordered his servant to be sent for on deck, into whose care he was consigned. It seems he has fainted from loss of blood, and in consequence they have at length ventured to take him below."

"Poor Tom," groaned the party addressed with a deep drawn sigh, "Much—very much will your messmates regret your early doom. Yet if fatal be your wound, you will die as you have always expressed a wish that you might, in honor's cause and fighting nobly for your king and your country. May the Lord in his abundant mercy and kindness take care of your soul."

"Amen," responded Capt. Dalrymple, at the same instant turning his back upon the first lieutenant that he might not be an observer of the tear which rolled from Mr. Rouseabout's eye as he concluded his speech.

We will now step below and see what was going on in the young gentlemen's mess birth. There jocularly and mirth seemed to preside. Those heedless youths looked as happy and apparently as unconcerned at the prospect of boarding an enemy's ship, which was the next thing they expected would take place when the action was re-commenced, as if they were about going with a party of liberty men on shore, where nothing but amusement and skylarking would be the order of the day. They were busy preparing themselves for the approaching conflict, and recounting to each other the valiant deeds they individually intended to perform, the thought of themselves being slain seeming not in the least to obtrude itself on their minds. We were just

taking a general survey of the whole party, when the familiar voice of one missing member was heard to proceed from some obscure corner which completely hid its owner from view, warbling to himself a stave from the old favourite ditty,

“My heart it is light, and my poor breeches are thin,
 So a true British sailor I'll be;
 And if I can prevent it the French shall not win,
 For they and I will never agree;
 They must keep clear of me,
 Or I shall let them see
 That I care for nobody,
 That I care for nobody,—
 Zounds, but I'll make Mounseer care for me.”

“*Encore*, my blossom, capital finish that to your song, Reuben, give us another verse and I'll join in the chorus,” said young Boyson in high glee, he not having heard of his cousin's dangerous wound.

“You'll bear-a-hand and come out o' that, my bairn, or you and I shall differ, lod, varry soon,” said the senior midshipman, Strachan, in a surly tone of voice, “I ken hoo to mak ye pipe in a daffrent kay, Mister Nightingale, so come out o' that, lod, I say.”

“There that's just the thing to give those lubberly French their gruel with. Let me see,” said the hidden songster, “what have I put in.—Oh, oh, there's the two buttons, I'd almost forget them. Well, now then, first of all there's one good ounce of powder at least to begin with by way of foundation, then on the top of that there's the bullet, then let me see, what comes next—why, there's the two buttons with crookled shanks, then there's the old steel watch chain, a broken penknife blade, and the whole topped up to the very muzzle with the worm of a corkscrew. Capital, that will do very well I think.”

A dirty little figure at this moment came crawling from underneath the table, where he had concealed himself for the purpose of loading an immense pistol, which was actually charged to the very mouth with the ingredients already mentioned. This, together with a cutlass, which by his side appeared so large, that it looked as if the youth was strapped to the weapon instead of the weapon being strapped to him, formed the whole of our hero's personal implements of defence.

"Ah! ah! ah!" laughed out another youngster upon the last named party. "Why, Reuben, you've rigged yourself out just like that cove spoken of in old Birchmwell's Scotch Latin. Don't you remember the Hexameter verses beginning—

Trumpeter erat unum, qui cotam scarlet habebat,
Et unam long swordam illeto which erat tiedfast!

Et--et,— and something else besides ending with *dumque redinam*, but positively I am forgetting all my classical lore."

"I say, Furlain, ask Mr. Sandy Blowporridge there, the man wot rubbed his back against a post and blessed the Duke of Argyle, he'll no doubt be able to remind you of the part you forget, because I know that he perfectly understands all about that lingo as well as he does trigonometry and treble X."

"I'll tell ye what, little Mister Wobblejaws," said Strachan, to whom our hero's last speech alluded, at the same time seizing the youth by the ear and violently pinching him, "The wee scent o' pooder ye have had already, lod, has made ye over plokky, I trow."

"If you don't leave off pinching my ear, old Heave-short, I'll just serve you as I intend to serve the French."

"Hoos that, lod, noo?"

“Why I will riddle your jacket and let daylight into your body with this,” answered the persecuted boy, at the same time presenting the cocked pistol to the breast of his senior messmate, “and then I’m arter thinking, as old Grant says, that you will soon be altogether pluckkyless.”

“Ah! ah! ah!—Good again!” shouted several of the younger members of the mess. “Well said, Reuben, pitch into him, another dose of that, ditto repeated, as the doctors say, that’s the sort of physic to purge a bully with, there wont be much braggadocia left in him after that.”

Strachan loosed his hold of the youth’s ear and turned ashy pale, but whether this visible change in his countenance proceeded from the fear of our hero putting his threat into execution, or whether it was on account of the angry passion it had caused to arise in his bosom, we are not able to assert, for just then all further altercation between the parties was put a stop to by the ‘beat to quarters’ being once more sounded throughout the ship. The berth was soon cleared of its inmates, who immediately on hearing the rat-tat-too of the drum and shrill notes of the fife, bounded off to their different stations.

Previous to going upon the quarter deck, Reuben went in search of the gunner’s yeoman for the purpose of procuring an augmentation to the small supply of ammunition which he carried in his pocket. On arriving at the door of the store room, he found it resisted his attempts to gain admission, being made fast inside. He placed his ear to the key hole to listen if the old man was within, and indistinctly heard two parties holding conversation on the other side, in ‘*sotto voce*.’

Thinking it was probably only the gunner talking to one of his mates, he knocked at the door with his knuckles in no very gentle manner.

"Then you decidedly pronounce his wound to be fatal, and positively think there is not a shadow of a chance for him to survive it?" asked one party.

"I am decidedly of that opinion, sir. No human skill can be of any avail now, nor could it have been if I had seen him sooner. The wound was a fatal one from the first," answered the other.

Again all was silent in the interior, when our hero gave a more violent second knock and demanded admission.

"Who's there?" asked the first speaker.

"*Cheeks, the marine, with his head cut*—who else do you think it is? Open the door and let me in, or I shall bleed to death," answered Reuben, who had recognized by the voice that one of the party was Mr. Galen, the surgeon of the frigate. In compliance with the youngster's request the door was slowly opened, when who should stand erect before him but Captain Dalrymple himself.

"Walk in, Mr. Cheeks, the marine, and take a seat until it is your turn for the surgeon to dress the cut in your head, *Mr. Cheeks, the marine*," said the last party, drawing his body up in an affronted and dignified manner as he stepped by the dumfounded youth, whom he left in the place to reflect upon the great breach of decorum which he had committed. The surgeon went out immediately after his commander.

"Well, I'll be flabbergasted!" commenced Reuben, soliloquising with himself. "Who would have thought of meeting with Old Crabs down here—whatever could

have brought him into this dinky hole! Oh, my! to think how I gave him the lip too! Well, bless my stars, I *have* put my foot in it this time however. Now I wonder if he knew me by my voice. I am sure he could not see who I was; so if he did not know my voice, I don't care, for

I've a light heart and a thin pair of breeches

Ri tol de rol—Ri tol-de rol-la!

Hollo, abaft there! I say, old Wadding, is that you? I want two or three more cartridges—come, hand over, old chap. Hollo!—I say, Wad—

“Hush, Mr. Reckless, hush,” said a voice, whispering in the midshipman's ear, at the same time placing a hand before his mouth to prevent him calling out. “Be silent, sir, if you please, let me beg of you; don't you see my poor master lying there on that chest, abaft all? He's dying, Mr. Reckless, he is indeed, sir.”

“Eh!—who!—what! Saunders, is that you?” asked the latter in a low voice.

“It is, sir, and there lies my poor master, Lieutenant Whitfield, mortally wounded,” answered the man as a rising sob almost choked his utterance.

“Who—Mr. Whitfield, say you? Why, how is it that he is left to die here, Saunders—why not remove him to his own cabin on the deck above and let him have the attention due to his rank?”

“The doctor said he was not to be moved from where he is now laid, Mr. Reckless, because doing so would not only aggravate his present tortures but would very likely hasten his death, sir.”

“Why his cousin, Mr. Boyson, is not even aware that he is wounded, Saunders; had you not better let him know that Mr. Whitfield is dying?”

"No, sir, my master requested me not to acquaint Mr. Boyson with what had happened until he gave me permission to do so. He seems a little easier now, sir; and perhaps will doze a short while. Hush, sir, he calls me. Oh, how very faint his voice is become!"

"Saunders, are you there—Saunders?" moaned the expiring young officer.

"I am here, sir," answered the faithful attendant.

"Put your ear close to my mouth, James. I want to ask you a few questions, and you will not be able to understand me unless you do so, I am growing so very weak."

"Drink a little more of this brandy, sir. There, that will revive you. Is your head comfortable, sir? shall I raise the pillow a little? Do you feel any easier now sir?"

"Thank you, James, thank you for your kindness. I feel more comfortable and stronger as well now. You are very, very good to me, James, indeed you are."

"Not more so than what it is my duty to be, Mr. Whitfield."

"Did you get the keys out of my trouser's pocket?"

"I did, sir, and gave into Captain Dalrymple's own hand, the one belonging to your private escrutoire."

"Thank you, James, that's just what I wished to know. Did I sign the paper for Captain Dalrymple legibly?"

"You wrote it very plainly, sir, and I put my name down as a witness to the same."

"Then that is all right. Was that the beat to quarters I heard just now, Saunders?"

"Yes, it was, We are at the present moment bearing down towards the enemy again."

"You can leave me you know, James, and go to your station when the action is recommenced."

"No, that I will not, sir. So long as you require my services, the king must do without them—unless you *order* me to leave you, Mr. Whitfield."

"Well, well. Be sure to tell my father, James, if you survive, that I fell in my country's cause while in the performance of my duty, and give him my sword, because I know he will value that more than any thing else I can bequeath him. My watch and seals I wish my cousin, Mr. Boyson, to have, and also give him that ring—here, take it off my finger and tell him to get some of my own hair set in the inside of it and then present it as a dying token of my unalterable attachment to his sister Matilda.—Oh, I begin to feel that dreadful pain in my groin again. Reach me some more brandy, Saunders—quick, man, quick, or I cannot endure it. Oh, mercy!—mercy! Good God take me to thyself and spare me this torture. Oh!—oh!—Good Lord have mercy!—let me die—let me die!"

Here the wounded lieutenant's cries were most piercing and pitiful. It was with the greatest difficulty that his man, assisted by young Reckless, could prevent him tearing the flesh from his lacerated groin. He seemed perfectly unconscious of every action and quite delirious with the anguish he bore. At last, as if exhausted with the exertion he had made to arise, he fell back into the arms of our hero and fainted.

"I fear he will not last long now, Saunders," said the latter.

"His pulse is strong yet, sir," answered the servant. "Ah, the sound of that gun seems to awaken him from his stupor."

The report of one of the cannons fired on deck at this moment was heard, when the dying man opened his languid eyes and exemplified the old adage, that the ruling passion is strong in death, by commencing in a low plaintive and most melodious voice the recitation to that beautiful song, "The Battle of Trafalgar."

"O'er Nelson's tomb with silent grief," &c.

Just as he had finished the first part, a heavy broadside was fired, which announced that the engagement had recommenced; as if invigorated by the sound, the dying officer again struck up and completed the verse beginning with,

"And now the cannons roar," &c.

After this he again became exhausted and wandering in his intellect, mixing up a variety of ideas, and occasionally singing staves from different airs with which he was acquainted. At last he broke out once more and was very violent, screeching and howling in the most dreadful agony. Again he became tranquil, but continued to wander in his speech. Another broadside and a loud shout attracted his ear, when he raised himself on his elbow, fixed his eyes upon the ceiling, and went through in a touching and pathetic strain the last verse of his favourite song—

"At length the dreadful wound
Which spread dismay around
Our hero's breast received;
Heaven fights on our side,
The day's our own, he cried,
Now long enough I've lived;
In honor's cause my life was past
In honor's cause I fall at last,—

For England, home, and beauty,
 For England, home, and beauty ;
 Thus ending life as he began,
 England confessed that every man
 That day had done his duty,
 That day had done his duty."

" Hark ! they shout !—the enemy has struck !—Victory is ours ! Hurrah ! hurrah ! What, cousin Jack, is that you ?" said the delirious sufferer, as he turned his gaze upon the face of our hero, whose breast formed a pillow for his head, and who now took upon himself to despatch the man, Saunders, in quest of young Boyson, whom the dying officer evidently supposed Reuben to be. " Well, I *am* glad you are come, John, although I did not like to send for you ; I wished to say a few words to you about your poor sister.—Tell her, John, that I loved—Oh ! oh ! they are tearing out my entrails. Stop them ! stop them ! I cannot endure it, indeed I cannot. Hurrah ! hurrah ! that's your sort, my brave boys. Make ready,—be cool, lads, wait until the smoke is blown to lu'ard before you take aim. Fire ! Hurrah !—Oh, I am wounded ! never mind me, prime and load, make ready, pres——Victory !" After these words the dying man muttered to himself in a lower key, " Tell poor Tilda, John, that I loved her to my dying hour. Captain Dalrymple knows something which will speak more for the strength of my affection for that dear sister of yours, John, than a volume of words can do. Oh, kind and merciful Lord, hear my last supplication unto thee.—As I would that thou should have mercy upon my wicked soul, so may it please thee to watch over and protect through all the trials of life her whom that soul hath so long thirsted after. Remember my dying words, John, and bear

them to my own dearest Matilda. Tell her, promise me on your knees before that God who seeth and is privy to all our actions, you'll tell her that now the last spark of life is about to be extinguished for ever, my last thought was hers, and her name was breathed with my latest sigh. Ah ! there is her angel-like form even now before my sight ;— she strews sweet flowers on the path and beckons me to follow her. Ah ! there too is my father—he smiles upon the poor girl.—Heavens ! how happy she looks, now that he acknowledges her as his daughter.—Lo ! he kisses her, even fondly as I myself would do. Yes, kind one, I see thee, and I will come presently. Hark ! what sweet music is that—it is—it must be her own voice warbling forth the song of victory. Yes, love, yes, I'll follow, I come. Oh ! what a dark and fearful chasm it is—I dare not—I cannot leap it ; something even now drags me away,—I must turn my back upon the abyss.—I cannot come again to thee on earth, my sweet girl, you must follow me up here where I am with my Redeemer in glorious heaven. Adieu, dearest, fond one. Farewell, father, we soon shall meet again, and all of us then be as happy as I am now—happy, oh, most supremely happy. God bless you, Matilda, my fondest love through life was thine, and in death it still retains its sway over my soul. Oh, God, I come, I come, receive my spirit. Hark ! again I hear the shouts of victory.—Hurrah ! hurrah ! Matilda, adieu, dearest Matil—”

At this moment the lieutenant, after thrusting his hand within his vest and pressing it close to his bosom, sprung up from his reclining posture and fell back a livid corpse.

Mr. Thomas Wells Whitfield was the second son of

a poor but exceedingly proud Baronet. Sir Arthur Whitfield had married in early life a rich heiress, by whom he had three sons, who were the sole joint heirs to their deceased mother's property, Sir Arthur having the enjoyment of it until his sons became of age. The marriage of the Baronet's sister to the rich merchant, Mr. Boyson, was a sad thorn in the side of the aristocratic brother, who for several years withheld his acquaintance altogether from the man of trade, as he styled his sister's husband. The children of both families were allowed to associate and to live in that state of friendly union in which cousins so closely allied by blood ought to live, until the growing attachment between the young Whitfield, whose death we have just related, and Matilda Boyson, became too apparent any longer to escape the notice of the Baronet. On this disclosure taking place, the father immediately applied for and obtained an appointment for his son in the Marines, and contrived to get him ordered on a foreign station, at the same time, thinking thereby to nip in the bud the youth's affections for his beautiful cousin. This young officer on account of his musical talents, and particularly amiable disposition, soon gained for himself many friends in the service. Oft do we recal to our minds the first time we were introduced to poor Tom Whitfield. He was indeed that sincere friend who could make glad the isolated heart, and plenteously pour the oil of kindness into its aching wounds. Oft have we sorrowfully gazed upon his vacant seat in that mess berth, to whose conviviality and happiness he formed so great a contributor. Many were the tears of silent regret that were shed for him by his brother officers, when they afterwards met and observed that the one universal favourite of them

all was missing, that one being who could safely say that he possessed not a single enemy,—and where was now the young and the beloved? Grim death, who oft earth's choicest flowers doth cull, had hovered over and claimed him for its own. How applicable are those two beautiful lines to poor Whitfield's death,

“ God takes the good—too good on earth to stay,
And leaves the bad—too bad to take away.”

Ah! he, poor fellow, was taken away in his pride, and departed this life without one kind relative near to close his expiring eyes. He lived the life of the christian, and he died the death of the hero—honored and regretted by all who knew him,—in the very first engagement too in which he had drawn his maiden sword, wherewith to fight his country's battles. Yes, such was the early fate of poor Thomas Wells Whitfield, and such, alas, is the doom of too many a noble and aspiring young officer in time of war. So much for glory!

As soon as Reuben Reckless had performed the last sad duty for his deceased brother officer which was in his power to perform, viz., laid the body out in a straight position upon its back and covered it over, he left the suffocating and dingy lower deck and ascended to the scene of action above, whither we will also lead our reader's attention, that they may be made acquainted with what had transpired there during the time that the melancholy exit from this world of one of the brightest ornaments of the profession, as recorded, took place below.

At daylight the action was again begun with renewed vigour on both sides. The *Brillante*, which was the name of the French ship, having had her jib sheet and foretopsail tie shot away, and her helm, probably from

the death of the men stationed at it, being for the moment unattended to, came so sharp to the wind that her way was completely deadened, and the ship lay in consequence with her stern and quarter exposed to her opponent's broadside. The shot from the *Sea Nymph's* aftermost guns taking a slant direction along the decks of the *Brillante*, beat in her stern-ports and swept her men away from their quarters, while the shot from her foremost guns at the same time entering the enemy's ports from the mainmast aft, did considerable execution among her crew, supposed to be at least a fourth superior in number. At this moment, however, in consequence of the English frigate's jib stay being shot away, the *Brillante* fell on board the *Sea Nymph*, with her quarter pressing upon the latter's side, just before her starboard main chains. The French ship's foresail just then being loose, owing to the weather clue garnet having been shot away, she forged a head a little, but was suddenly stopped by hooking with her quarter port, the flook of the *Sea Nymph's* anchor, stowed over the chess-tree.

Captain Dalrymple now sprung forward and, observing the *Brillante's* men deserting the quarter-deck guns, he ordered the two ships to be lashed together, the great guns to cease firing, and the main deck boarders to be called. While zealously employed outside the bulwark of the *Sea Nymph*, making the French ship fast to her, the veteran boatswain, Mr. Junk, who had fought in Rodney's action, had his left arm completely hacked off with repeated sabre cuts and was mortally wounded by musketry.* The little classical midshipman, Mr. Furlain, whom we have before named, was also at the same

* This circumstance actually took place.

fore yard and to throw a double bow line knot over the body of the suspended youth.

"For God's sake, sir, hold on one moment longer while I make fast the rope," said the man to the latter in an agitated tone of voice, as he took a turn round the yard with the part he held in his hand. "There, it's all right now; you may let go, sir. There's lower away for you handsomely. All gone, sir—all gone. Hurrah! he's safe."

The liberator slid quickly down on deck by one of the backstays, then whispered something into the ear of the youth whose life he had saved, at the same time taking off his own neckerchief, and having bound it tightly round the wounded head of the latter, he pushed him unceremoniously before him towards the main hatchway.

"There, that will stop the bleeding, sir; now, bear a hand for God's sake or he will be dead before you get to him." As the man said these words, both he and the party whom he addressed descended the ladder leading below and immediately disappeared off deck.

The combatants having now come to close quarters, the fight became general, and a dreadful scene of carnage ensued. Captain Dalrymple, at the head of a picked body of men, was to be seen in the thickest part of the *melée*. What a noise and tumult now rent the air! Amidst the curses and swearing of the sailors, the cheering of the officers, and the exulting shouts of the successful, were intermingled the groans of the dying, the bitter cries of the wounded, and shrieks for mercy from those who lay prostrate before their more powerful foes. They alone who have been actors in such scenes can possibly conceive the confusion and uproar that prevails on boarding an enemy's ship.

Captain D. in his ardour to achieve a speedy victory, got separate from his own men and was beset upon the quarter deck of the French ship, to which place he had gallantly fought his way by a numerous body of the enemy. Captain D. parried the middle fellow's pike and wounded him in the face, but instantly received from the man on the pikeman's right, a blow with the butt end of a musket, which bared his skull and nearly stunned him. Determined to finish the British commander, a third huge fellow was about to cleave him to the deck with a tomahawk which he held already poised in the air, when a slender youth, leading on a party of brawny English tars to the assistance of their distressed captain, crept between the legs of the combatants and with a pistol loaded to the very muzzle, shot the assailant dead upon the spot. The body of the slain Frenchman fell upon Captain Dalrymple and bore him down to the deck with its weight. As soon as they observed the fall of the latter, supposing him to be killed, the enemy set up a loud shout of triumph, but old Grant, who was close upon the heels of the valiant young midshipman, at this moment stepped up to Captain D. and assisted him to arise, singing out as he did so in the very teeth of his adversaries,

"Ah, ah, you set of mongrel Jonny Choppeaus, you are all o' ye mistaken this time in your man, for, d'ye see, he's a cock as will crow yet in spite o' ye. Cheer up, yer honor, cheer up, we shall easy lick these ere Mounseers yet, I'll warrant, mind that Captain."

This speech of the quarter-master so exasperated a French officer who was slashing about him on all sides, that he aimed a blow with his sword at the old man's head. Grant nimbly stepped on one side and avoided

the cut, which severed the epaulet from his Captain's shoulder, who again lost his foot hold and fell down on the blood-slippery deck. The officer was about to repeat the assault upon the prostrate and disarmed commander, when the young midshipman before mentioned again sprung forward and dashed his discharged pistol with unerring aim into the face of the advancing Frenchman, exclaiming,

"There, take that, you black-whiskered, white-livered son of a sea cook!"

"Bravo! well done my little bantam," shouted old Grant.

"*Vous petit coquin*," bawled the infuriated officer, at the same time applying both his hands to his face, which was deep and painfully lacerated with the pistol lock, "*Oh! Mon Dieu le garçon m'a aveuglé!*"

"And serves you right too, if you can't take a joke, you Nincompoop," said the young reefer laughing.

"And take that for yer bad manners in going for to strike yer betters when they were down, you frog-eating soup-imbibing Mounseer; I'll be bund ye'll know better haviour the next time we meet, if you get over that brob, you lobster-looking, herring-gutted lubber you."

Attendant upon this very elegant effusion from old Grant the French officer received a desperate thrust from a boarding pike between his ribs, just against the heart, instantly after which he leaped a considerable height in the air and then fell mortally wounded.

Captain Dalrymple once more gained his legs, and not forgetting to assume the hauteur of the commander, even while he expressed the gratitude of the man, thus addressed the youth who had so ably assisted him in his danger.

"Young gentleman, receive my thanks for having saved my life at the risk of your own,—I shall not forget your conduct depend upon it." This speech, although comprised of few words, meant much, as will be hereafter disclosed.

"I hope you will not forget it, sir, as I shall not I am very sure," replied the midshipman, casting his eye upon the stump of a finger which he had lost in the fight.

"Ah, *Mr. Cheeks the Marine*, is that you," said Captain D. with a good natured smile, as he recognized Reuben Reckless, "Why really you are so besmeared with blood and smoke, that I did not know which of my young gentlemen it was until you spoke. *Are you wounded severely, Reuben?*" enquired he in a tone expressing deep-felt solicitude.

"A mere scratch, Captain Dalrymple, nothing more, sir," answered our hero aloud, and then adding in a low key, "Oh, crikey! why old Crabs knew me after all." He bounded off to another part of the deck where there appeared some close work going forward.

"Courageous youth!" muttered the English commander to himself, as he eyed the active reefer, who again had pushed into the very thickest of the *melée*. "How proud should I be were I the father of such a son." After saying thus, Captain D. beginning to feel faint and dizzy from loss of blood, seated himself for a few seconds upon the nearest carronade. Captain Dalrymple had no children, which circumstance was often a source to him of deep regret.

The battle still continued to rage with fearful and undecided obstinacy. The quarter-deck of the French ship was taken and re-taken several times, at length the

enemy were so vigorously assaulted by Captain Dalrymple and his dauntless men, that they were obliged to retreat to the fore-castle, where they took refuge and made a last stand behind a temporary defence which they had raised upon the break, from two embrasures in which were to be seen a couple of long thirty-two pounders, charged to the mouth with grape and canister, and raised point blank upon the assailants. Captain D. immediately on observing what was done, ordered his men to screen themselves by lying flat upon the deck and by getting behind the aftermost carronades, while he hesitated for a moment whether it would be advisable to commence the attack upon this formidable looking battery, by storming it. With his present diminished number of followers, it appeared madness to attempt it; but then he thought, what cannot personal bravery and a daring example achieve with men like these who obey me as their commander? He had just determined upon calling out for volunteers, and to lead on the *forlorn hope* in person, when his attention was arrested by a laughable circumstance that was taking place on the opposite side of the deck to where he himself lay concealed, in the midst of the firing of small arms too, which was constantly being kept up by both parties.

Reuben Reckless had thrown himself down flat upon his face on the deck, and there lay perfectly concealed behind the apparently slain body of a very bulky Frenchman. Whether it was the beauty of the sword worn by the latter, or his immense size and uniform altogether, for he was an officer, that attracted our hero's most particular attention, we cannot say, but certainly he fixed his gaze upon the beautiful weapon with an inward determination to make it his own as soon as he

had taken his position alongside the body. For the purpose of obtaining this prize Reuben made an attempt to roll the body over, that he might get at the buckle which fastened the belt around it ; just at that moment however, the Frenchman, as if suddenly endowed with life, rolled over of his own accord towards the young reefer, and then fixing his eyes with a most horrible squint upon those of the latter, the relative positions of the two became face to face. For the purpose of scraping an acquaintance with the formidable enemy who so closely confronted him, our hero by way of a prelude to conversation, nodded his head to the bushy faced foreigner, which said nod was accompanied with a most wicked and mischievous-meaning glance. This kind of introduction not having the desired effect, for the two oblique visioned orbs still remained fixed upon his own, with the most immoveable steadfastness; Reuben next ventured to open his mouth, and uttered in a burlesque manner the commonly hackneyed French phrase of salutation, precisely with the same pronunciation as words spelt in a similar way would be spoken in our own language.

"*Comments vous portez vous Mountseer?* or, as they say in our lingo, How are you old chap? or, if you like it better, Good morning to you first, if you are up to that, Mr. Gimblet-eye, hope you've had a pleasant nap, sir." This salutation producing no effect, Reuben next brobbed his knuckles into the ribs of his adversary, and added, "Rather close quarters this, Mr. What's-yer-name, eh! shove to starboard a bit, will you?" Still no answer from the Frenchman, whose eyes remained as immoveable in their gaze as ever. "I say, don't look down your nose so while you stare at me, Mr. Whisker-andos, you'll make me squint as bad as yourself soon.

That complaint is catching they say," observed Reuben, at the same time taking hold of the foreigner's last named prominent feature and giving it a good tug. This insult was not to be borne without a remark from the Gaul who quickly drew his head back to get his nose free from the youth's grasp, and exclaimed aloud, as he gnashed his teeth with ire and pain.

"*Sacre de diable.*"

"Oh! what you've found your voice at last have you," said the young man, then giving a most impudent wink, attendant upon which impudent wink a certain nasal snort of chuckling, similar to that made by boys at school when they try to smother a laugh, was heard to proceed from his mouth, as he added, at the same time pointing to the thirty-two pounder before which in a direct line they both lay, "Do you see that thirty-two pound pocket pistol abaft you, old chap,—nice sort o' thing that to shoot musquitoes with, is it not? I'm thinking mine's a tolerable comfortable berth under your lee, Mr. Gimblet-eye. Just to oblige me remove your corkscrew glance from off my face for one moment, and take a squint at that beautiful animal behind you, with its mouth so chock full of grape and other delicious fruit."

In compliance with this request of the reefer, the bulky Frenchman turned his head round and looked for the first time at the dreadful engine that was ranged so as to sweep the deck where he lay. Before he had not been aware of the danger of his situation, but now that he was become acquainted therewith, as if suddenly seized with the instinct of self-preservation, he began to manifest divers symptoms of uneasiness and evident signs of speedily removing his quarters. To accomplish this he first began like a crab to crawl with his body side-

ways, to avoid observation, then having got his head fair for a run, he bolted at one of the port-holes leading into the forechains, in a very similar manner to that which a timid hare adopts when she is making for a snuse in a hedge bottom, thinking no doubt by that route he would be enabled to join his own party on the forecastle.

"Hollo! avast there, Mr. Gimlet-eye, what you mean to cut and run do you, but here's all sail in chase however," sung out Reuben as he sprung after the unwieldy mass of human flesh, and seized him by the skirts of his coat just as he had obtruded half his body through the port-hole, the other on hinder half, on account of its bulky size, being jammed fast therein.

The first thing our hero did was to draw the sword of his adversary which he had shortly before so very much coveted from its sheath, then applying the point of the same to the posterior of the latter, he commenced a system of lanceting that part, without the slightest opposition, save and except that which he experienced from the kicking out of his patient's legs, which became as the operation went on very formidable. Each separate puncture being attended with these words from the operator.—"Surrender, you are my prisoner, Monsieur, I charge you to surrender or die."

"Oh mon garçon—oh mon brave garçon! Ayez pitié et je veux surrender—ayez pitié et je veux surrender! De l'honneur de la Belle France, ne me blessez pas au derrière—ou vous causerez qu'on doutera mon courage. La grande nation le ressentira!" cried out the Frenchman in a most pitiful strain.

The scene we have just described attracted Captain Dalrymple's attention just at the moment he was about

to call his volunteers about him, for the purpose of making an attack upon the enemy's forecastle. Old Grant was close by the side of his commander and also saw what was going on, even at the very muzzle of the loaded carronade ; he looked up into the face of his commander, and then taking off his old tarry hat, made, with a smile of delight on his countenance, the following remark :—

“ What a rigler young dare-devil that Mister Reckless be, Captain, axing yer honor's pardon for wenturing the observation ; but I'm arter thinking we shall never rear him, for, d'ye see, the young gentleman seems so fond o' the sport like—it's quite unkimmon how fond he is.”

“ Do fetch that boy here, Grant,” answered the Captain, who treated the old quarter master's remark as though it came from one whom he considered as a privileged favourite. “ Really that young urchin is always exposing himself unnecessarily to danger. Do fetch the young gentleman to me instantly, Grant.”

“ Dezactly so, yer honor ; if you only orders me to do it, I would fetch the reefer out o' the werry cannon's mouth.” After answering thus, the old seaman approached our hero and accosted him. The latter persisting the while to tug away with all his puerile might at the skirts of the Frenchman's coat.

“ Come out o' that, you young fire eater. Avast hauling astern, sir. Stand clear and mind yourself while I give the mounseer a shove ahead. Come out o' that I say, Mister Reckless, and let me give his fat carcase a free passage to Davy Jones's locker.” Old Grant, at the same time suiting the action to the word, as he said thus, placed his foot upon the posterior of the enemy, and with a powerful shove, sent the body of the

latter right through the port hole heels over head into the sea.

"Now, Grant, that's too bad, you've quite spoilt my sport; besides which, you've prevented me possessing myself of the sheath to this beautiful sword," said our hero, rather pettishly.

"Oh, as for the matter o' that, yer honor, there'll be plenty more o' the same kind o' sport to be had aboard this ship, I'll be bund, afore we've done with her. And as for the tother thing, Mister Reckless, it arnt worth the value of a Jew's eye full o' split peas. Psha! it's only a scure, sir, as would do for a toothpick or to spit a bit o' fresh beef with; I wouldn't be seen at a bull-bait we a spider's leg the likes o' that ere thing. The cutlass I've got along side o' me, sir, is worth a dozen sich for hactical service, I ll warrant."

"Your cutlass may be better, as you say, Grant, for *hack*-tival service, but for doing the genteel in the way of a thrust or brob, you may depend there's nothing like a weapon of this sort. Now, for instance, just feel how nicely it goes through your old tarry trowsers and then in what a delicate manner it pierces the skin — sharp as a needle, Joey, is it not?"

"Odds bullets and blunderbusses! knock off that game, Mister Reckless, and avast with your skylarking!" sung out the old seaman as he applied his hand to the part where our hero had pricked him, at the same time writhing his body into the most ludicrous contortions to avoid a repetition of the assault. "Zounds, sir, avast I say, and don't be arter making a pincushion o' my starn, cos, mind ye, its kivering art made o' quite sich coarse materials as the like o' that ere."

"There, now we'll cry quits, Joey, that's for shoving

the sheath overboard remember. It's a beautiful article though this sword of the mounseer's, is it not, old fellow?"

"I'll tell you what I'm arter thinking, sir, that same tingtang you hold in your hand is more toothsome to the eye like than it is to the —"

"Hush, Joey!—silence! What the deuce does all that stir on the fork-stle mean? Let me jump on to your shoulders, Grant, I may then perhaps be able to see over the bulwark and learn what they are up to."

At this moment a sudden commotion was observed to take place behind the defence where the enemy had screened themselves, close under the mouth of one of the carronades pointing from which Reuben and old Grant were standing.

"Squat down on the deck, Joey!—mind yourself, old boy, and keep clear of all! They be going to fire, Joey—they be going to fire!" sung out one of the Sea Nymph's men, who had watched the proceedings of the enemy through the embrasure and had observed that they were about to apply a lighted torch to the touch-hole of the 32 pounder.

"Come along aft with you, Mister Reckless, we must not stay here any longer. Don't you see that ere gun how it is a grinning at us, sir?" said the old seaman, as he seized the young reefer by the arm and very uncereemoniously commenced dragging him away from his dangerous and exposed situation. "Come along with you I say," then in a lower tone of voice muttered to himself—"What a young dare-devil it is surely."

"Let go my arm, Grant, or I will report you for disrespect to your superior officer."

"We have no time to discuss the merits o' that ere

subject just now, sir, for, d'ye see, I'm only obeying the skipper's orders wot he gived me—so come along yer honor, '*nolens volens*,' as my old uncle used to say." With these words the quartermaster forcibly took the reckless young midshipman up by the waist and having fixed the youth under his arm was about to walk aft with his load, when his progress was stopped by Captain Dalrymple, who seeing that not a moment longer was to be lost without making an attack, called his men about him and boldly advancing at their head, they, with one simultaneous rush, attempted to storm the enemy's fortress upon her fore-castle.

The Frenchman had already knocked the ashes off the end of his torch and was just in the very act of igniting the priming powder upon the touch-hole of the carronade, when the sharp crack of a rifle was heard to proceed from the *Brillante's* main top, the bullet from which whizzed by Captain D's. ear and shot the man dead upon the spot. Another French sailor instantly seized the torch from his dead comrade's hand and applied it to the powder, when a second shot from the same quarter laid him a corpse also by the side of his countryman, but not before he had fired off the carronade, which swept clear the deck before it like a scythe, laying low many a brave British tar, amongst whom old Grant and our hero were observed to fall. Immediately after the carronade was fired and, indeed, almost at the same instant, another most dreadful explosion stunned the ears of the combatants and shook both ships in the most violent manner. But before we account for the latter circumstance, we must beg our reader's attention to a more pathetic scene which took place on board the English frigate during one part of the engagement.

In the aftermost apartment of the Sea Nymph's lower or orlop's deck, stretched out at length upon an empty small-arm chest, which had been constructed into a temporary couch, lay the motionless form of a man, covered over with an old union jack ensign, which was turned down at the chin, in the same manner as a counterpane would be. At a first view, the party might have been supposed to be asleep, for the place was quite dark but for the small glimmer of light which escaped from a dingy lantern suspended from the ceiling, whose flickering blaze was very much in the wane. By the side of the couch knelt a youth of tender age. The latter seemed to be severely wounded in the head, for his temples were bound tightly round with a black handkerchief, from the folds of which thick drops of dark coloured blood were observed occasionally to roll over his brow, the hair which covered the wound from whence the hemorrhage escaped being one clotted mass of the same. The youth appeared quite unconscious of the bleeding, for his mind was wholly absorbed in devotional exercise. His beautiful and expressive eyes were directed towards heaven, and his hands, within which a small bible was held, were clasped together in the supplicating attitude of silent prayer. From the dirty and black appearance of this interesting figure, who had on neither jacket nor neckerchief, and whose shirt and trousers were begrimed all over with smoke and gunpowder, he might have been taken for one of the boys before the mast, as there was nothing in his external appearance, save the fine texture of his linen and the delicacy of his hands to denote him otherwise; but when he opened his lips and addressed himself to that Supreme Being, by whom even the hairs of our head are numbered, his prayer told that he be-

longed to a higher order and better educated class of society. The youth at length lowered his gaze, when it became intently fixed upon the features of the face of him by whom he knelt. Oh! what inward agony of soul was expressed in that one look, for it was a corpse that lay stretched before him. A single drop of warm black blood fell from his own dripping locks upon the pale face of the deceased. Once more he gazed upon those pallid features, then turning his eyes again towards heaven, he continued his humble prayer.

The young midshipman (for it was no other than John Boyson) then rose up on his feet and was about to draw the union jack over the face of the corpse previous to leaving the apartment, when his eye caught sight of a glittering trinket which the deceased seemed to have pressed close to his bosom in his dying moments. The youth's curiosity was naturally excited as he drew the object from its resting place. Upon examination he found it to be the miniature likeness of a beautiful young lady, with some of the golden hair of the original encased in the back. John gazed at the painting for a second when his trembling hand refused its office and let the miniature fall, at the same time a gush of tears burst from the young reefer's eyes as he exclaimed, "Oh, God, it is my sister Matilda's portrait—and *they were betrothed to each other!* Dearest—dearest Matilda, his death will be a shock indeed to thee. Poor fond girl! how deeply will thy heart be stung at the news thereof. But our cousin's devoted attachment, which was even strong unto death—shall be told unto thee if thy own fond brother survives.—Unhappy pair, how blighted is your love." Young Boyson covered up the face of the deceased lieutenant of marines, and was going to retire,

when a slight groan, which escaped from some one near, reminded him that a third party was present. He looked round and saw seated upon an empty shot-locker in one corner of the room, Saunders, the faithful servant of his cousin, who had but a few minutes before saved his own life, and afterwards had accompanied him to the apartment of death.

"Well, Saunders," said young Boyson, "what an unfortunate thing it is that we did not get here a few minutes sooner, I might then very probably have heard my poor cousin's dying request, for his body is scarcely cold yet. Are you quite sure that you heard him mention my name, Saunders?"

"Oh yes, sir," answered the latter, "he began to converse just as though he fancied you were present. Mr. Reckless, who I have no doubt would remain with my poor master to the last, immediately ordered me to go in search of you, which I promptly obeyed, and consequently I heard nothing more than Mr. Whitfield said after. But I see, sir, *you* are wounded severely, had you not better go to the surgeon, Mr. Boyson, I hope your hurt is not very painful, sir?"

"My wound is nothing very serious, Saunders, thank you; it is merely a tear on the scalp from a splinter—nothing more."

"Thank God it is no worse, Mr. Boyson. These splinter wounds are sometimes very dangerous, and oft fatal, my poor master to wit. His was a splinter, sir."

"You did not see him fall, Saunders, I think you told me?"

"No, sir, I did not, but I was with him very shortly after, and never left his side until Mr. Reckless sent me to seek for you."

"That was very kind of you, Saunders, and you may depend upon it I shall not forget to mention your conduct to Sir Arthur Whitfield his father, who I know will reward you for such fidelity to your master."

"Oh sir, don't mention such a thing as recompensing me for my services to Mr. Whitfield.—I have only done my duty, Mr. Boyson, to one whom I would have sacrificed my life for.—He was always so kind and gentle in his manners towards me; indeed he never treated me like his servant—he always behaved to me as if I was his equal, which I was not. Oh no, far from it, God knows. I really loved your cousin, Mr. Boyson, as I would have loved a brother."

"James, speak no more of it just now I beg of you," said the midshipman, as he raised the back of his hand to his eye and dashed away the tear which had started therefrom. "We all of us loved him sincerely, he was such a real christian and so truly amiable in disposition, but God's will be done."

"Amen," responded the other with a heavy sigh, which seemed to proceed from his very heart's core.

The noise and war-like din which now proceeded from the enemy's quarter-deck, as the fight continued to rage, descended below and almost prevented the two from hearing each other speak. Young Boyson ordered the man, Saunders, to charge a rifle and a musket which they found in the place, and also to pack up a plentiful supply of cartridges for the use of both. This being done they each armed themselves with a brace of loaded pistols and a cutlass. After the midshipman had deposited his sister's portrait safely within his own bosom, he again addressed his companion.

"Now, Saunders, we must leave the dead and obey the calls of duty, are you quite ready?"

"Quite ready, Mr. Boyson, to accompany you wherever you may go," answered the other.

"Here, sling that rifle across my back by the strap, Saunders, and give me a few of the cartridges to put into my trousers pockets. That will do thank you; now keep close to my heels and follow me, James."

"Lead on, sir, I'll quickly follow," said the latter as young Boyson left the apartment, then turning towards the corpse of the deceased lieutenant, he dropt down upon one knee by its side, and added in a hasty manner, "Farewell, thou best and kindest of masters, thy death shall be avenged." In what a direful and effectual manner this vow was accidentally accomplished, the result of this chapter will explain.

"Now, Saunders," said young Boyson as soon as they had arrived on deck, and had taken a view of matters as they then stood, "You see that union jack at the Sea Nymph's fore, it is blown foul of the haliards and does not show out properly, and therefore of no use whatever where it now is."

"I see it, sir, what may be your orders?"

"Follow me into the fore-top, and I will then explain what I wish you to do." The two nimbly ascended by the English frigate's fore-shrouds accordingly.

"There, now leave your musket here, Saunders, while you go and unbend that ensign, which bring along with you and follow me by our foreyard, and then along the enemy's main yard arm into the *Brillante's* main-top."

The man, Saunders, possessed himself of the colors, which he folded about his body, then joined the young officer in the enemy's main-top by the route he was ordered to take. Having screened themselves from observation as well as circumstances would allow, abaft

the French ship's lowermost head, these two individuals commenced a system of warfare after their own fashion, which was not only very galling, but also very destructive to the enemy, fighting upon the *Brillante's* deck below them ; for just as young Boyson and his accomplice had taken their position aloft, the battle was raging at its very hottest pitch.

It so happened that upon the *Brillante's* fore-castle, there was standing a very large and open cask of musket cartridges, for the use of the French marines, and small arm men stationed there. We have before observed that just as the first man was about to apply the lighted torch to the carronade, when Captain Dalrymple was leading on his forlorn hope to attack the enemy's strong hold in that part of their ship he, (the Frenchman) was shot by a rifle from the main-top. This was the act of the English midshipman, Mr. Boyson, who had his eye upon all that was going on below. But the next shot from the French ship's main-top, which killed the second man who had just at that same instant fired the priming of the thirty-two pound carronade, was the act of the man, Saunders, who was with him. As soon as the Frenchman last named had received his death wound, he fell back and in his dying agony threw the lighted torch up in the air, which in its descent alighted upon the cask of musket cartridges and caused them to ignite. This was the cause of the dreadful explosion we alluded to a few pages back, and it was this blowing up of ammunition that did more execution amongst the enemy in a few seconds, than all that Captain Dalrymple and his brave followers had accomplished throughout the engagement. There were to be seen headless trunks and mutilated limbs flying

about in all directions. A dreadful massacre it was to look upon. Truly was the man Saunders's vow of revenge most fully accomplished. When the smoke arising from the explosion had partially cleared off, the ensign of old England was to be seen hoisted at the *Brillante's* main royal mast-head, proudly flaunting in graceful folds over the sullied white flag of France, which was once more not only stained in color but also in reputation. At the top gallant mast-head just beneath the lower ensign and with one arm folded round the spar, stood the midshipman, young John Boyson, gallantly waving his hat in the air as he triumphantly sung with a loud and audible voice that song which strikes home to the heart of every Englishman on account of its beauty, nationality, and the spirit of valiant enthusiasm which it ever excites, viz., "Rule Britannia," &c.*

We will now cast a veil over this scene of horror and bloodshed, and draw our present long chapter to a close.

* For a more particular account of this engagement we beg to refer our readers to James's Naval History.

CHAPTER V.

THE PURSER.

“ Was there ever seen such villany,
So neatly plotted, and so well performed,
Both held in hand, and flatly both beguiled?”

JEW OF MALTA.

“ This is a long description, but applies
To scarce five minutes past before the eyes.”

BYRON.

THE engagement, which forms the closing scene of the last chapter our reader anticipates, terminated favourably for our countrymen, and added another bright laurel to the naval glory of old England. Not many days afterwards the Sea Nymph arrived safely into port with her vanquished prize.

Lieutenant Oliver, who it will be remembered received a musket shot through the foot on the first attempt being made to board the enemy, was so disabled in consequence of the obstinacy of the wound, that he was obliged to request leave of absence for a while from his professional duties. The request being complied with, he embarked on board a small craft bound for one of the neighbouring colonies, for the purpose of visiting some friends of his family, who resided there. Our hero and Old Grant, although not quite restored to perfect convalescence from their wounds and stunning effects of the concussion, caused by the explosion which took place so near to them, were still sufficiently so to attend to their separate duties.

on board. Captain Dalrymple and his officers having received the compliments of the Admiral for the splendid victory they had achieved, and the frigate having been reported ready for sea again, she was once more despatched on a cruise.

Several weeks elapsed, and nothing of any particular importance, save and except the encountering a violent squall or two, occurred on board the *Sea Nymph*, until she arrived in the bay of Tortola, where she had anchored for the purpose of taking in fresh provisions for the crew. On this same island Mr. Oliver had resided, during his furlough, with a Colonel Nesbit, to whose deceased lady he was a distant relation.

The dawn after the frigate's arrival was ushered in with that beautifully bright and cloudless sky so peculiar to the Indian climate. The hands were below, listlessly reclining upon their chests and rationless mess tables, in momentary expectation of being summoned from their morning's meal by the Boatswain's shrill pipe; when Mr. Rouseabout made his appearance on deck.

"Have the people had their time, Garratt?" asked the latter.

"They have sir," answered the newly appointed Boatswain, respectfully tipping his hat—"shall I call them up sir?"

"Call all hands, Mr. Garratt, we'll set the rigging up fore and aft. That last squall has very much eased these new shrouds, I see, begin with them first; and pass the word for the first cutters to prepare themselves to go on shore."

"Ay, ay, sir."

The last order of the first Lieutenant had scarcely been passed along the lower deck, when a most violent up-

roar of many voices in dispute, intermingled with angry exclamations, sounds of tumbling, smashing of crockery, the clattering of pewter plates, and various other noises denoting a desperate quarrel between several combatants was heard to proceed therefrom.

"What's the row below there?" shouted the man in authority down the after-hatchway, in a voice that caused instant silence to prevail.—"What's all that quarrelling about there, Master-at-Arms, do they mean heaving the ship overboard?"

"There's a mutiny in the young gentlemen's mess berth, sir," answered the man addressed, with his head peeping over the comings of the hatch.

"Who are the mutineers?"

"Mister Strachan and Mister Reckless are the two principals, but I believe all the members of the mess are lending a hand in the affray, sir."

"Tell Mr. Strachan and Mr. Reckless to come upon deck to me instantly, I'll have no more of these disturbances."

The two delinquents soon appeared before their superior. Blood was streaming down the face of the older one, from a severe cut on the head, obtained by the aforesaid head happening to come in contact with a soup tureen. The younger midshipman had one eye bound up in a black silk handkerchief, and his left arm hung in a sling from his neck.

"How's this, young gentlemen—what's the meaning of these disgraceful wounds, Mr. Strachan? It's a pity you cannot bottle up your mad blood until you have occasion to shed it in a more honourable cause."

"Mr. Reckless, sir," commenced the senior,—

"Mr. Strachan, if you please sir," interrupted the

younger member of the young gentlemen's mess —

"Oh, I see how it is youngster, you have been playing off some of your wild pranks at your senior mess-mate's expense, and he has attempted to chastise you for it. Follow me to my cabin, Mr. Reckless, and you go and get your wound dressed, Mr. Strachan, and join us there, I then will hear your case."

The three descended below accordingly, when Mr. Rouseabout was made acquainted with the following facts of the origin of the quarrel :—

Mr. M'Grudgem, alias '*Jem Lanternjaws*,' as he was often nicknamed, the Purser of the Sea Nymph, was a dry skinned, shrivelled faced, meagre looking Scotchman ; with remarkably high cheek bones, large awkward jaws, and very wide nostrils, the latter being particularly well adapted for their owner's extravagant habit of snuff-taking. Mr. M'Grudgem was very selfish, fond of excess both in eating and drinking, and of a penurious disposition ; indeed his avarice on some occasions quite overcame his honesty. Many a good guinea had rolled into the Purser's pocket, which had been made by perquisites, dishonestly screwed from the hard earned allowance of poor Jack.

We have observed that Mr. M'Grudgem was a great snuff-taker, but never did he '*tak the wee pinch*,' a term which he generally thus applied to about as much of the article as would lie within the palm of his hand, with so much real gratification to himself, as when it was acquired at the expense of others. Now it so happened that Mr. Strachan and the Purser were sworn friends for a considerable time ; but this friendship was perfectly natural between two countrymen, and it lasted just while it suited the selfish attainment which each

had in view. Mr. Strachan was the caterer of the mess to which he belonged ; therefore, it was policy on his part to keep upon good terms with the man who had the superintendence of the ship's stores. Mr. M'Grudgem was most passionately fond of the '*real high dried*,' of which kind of snuff Mr. Strachan, who was also given to the propensity of making his nose a dust hole, had a very plentiful supply ; therefore, it was policy on the part of the Purser to keep upon friendly terms with the man who had possession of the snuff. Thus matters went on smoothly until a difference in their accounts, which said difference very strongly proved that the Purser intended to overcharge the young gentlemen's mess with divers and sundry ship's stores, which, although due to them, they had managed to do without, that they might exchange the same for the more luxurious fare to be obtained at Tortola. This defraud being fully substantiated, it not only made a breach between the two Scotchmen, but it also caused the other members of the mess to vow vengeance against their dishonest Purser—unless their rights were allowed to them.

It was about an hour past noon of a hot sunny day, when the last named individual, after taking from his mouth a complete false set of teeth, and having deposited them within a basin of cold water, threw his lanky form in an easy reclining posture upon the luxurious couch, which furnished one side of his cabin, with the intention of dozing away an hour previous to preparing for the dinner table. A gentle rap at the door outside attracted his attention, desiring the party to come in, the door opened, and our hero entered.

"Weel Reuben, my bonny bairn, what news, lod, what news?"

"Mr. Strachan, sir, has sent me to ask if you have made out the error in our mess account, and whether the stores are to be allowed us."

"Go back, give my compliments to your messmate, Mr. Reckless, and tell him that I have made the account all straight and that the stores are allowed accordingly, also say that I will thank him for just a wee pinch of his rael Scotch."

The imp of mischief suddenly planted himself at that very moment in the youth's brain ; he cast his eyes upon the basin containing the precious teeth, for precious indeed they were to their owner, they being the only effective set Mr. M'Grudgem had in his possession, all the others he brought with him from England being out of repair. But how to purloin the teeth without being observed our young reefer was puzzled. At length a thought struck him. He hastened off to the ship's steward and begged a portion of cayenne pepper, this ingredient he craftily slipped into his messmate's snuff-box, which, as was often the case, stood open upon the table at the elbow of the caterer. This being accomplished, he silyly winked at young Boyson, and then delivered Mr. M'Grudgem's message to his countryman, which, for mere *ceeveelity's* sake the latter could not refuse to comply with.

On several former occasions Mr. Strachan had made bullets and had set the younger midshipman to shoot them, always taking care to screen himself in such a manner that the consequences thereof were sure to fall upon the backs of the perpetrators, but on this occasion our hero, who had more than once been a victim to his treachery, was determined to reverse the system, for he not only became the bullet maker, but he also made his

senior messmate the instrument whereby to carry his scheme into effect.

"I think we had better keep friendly with Old Lanternjaws now he has acknowledged his error and has granted us the stores," said one of the members of the mess.

"Oh, decidedly so, I will hand your snuff to him, Mr. Strachan," said our hero, at the same time taking the silver box from the table and very leisurely walking off with it.

"Hoot awa, lod, hoot awa!" shouted the careful Scot in the broad dialect of his own country. "Naw, naw, youngster, gie me the box, I'll een gang wi it mysen,—I ken it winna dew to trust oure muckle wi th mon."

With these words the caterer of the young gentlemen's mess made his exit, and presented himself in his countryman's cabin situated on the deck above.

"You're oure gude Mr. Strachan," said the Purser, his eyes glistening with delight as he saw the party addressed enter with the well supplied snuff-box open in his hand. "Indeed I'm varry sorry to trouble ye so, lod."

"Tak for yerself, Mr. M'Grudgem, ye're varry welcume. It is no trouble, sir, I assure ye, I'm oure prood o' the honour," replied the midshipman proffering the box.

"Thonk ye, Mr. Strachan, thonk ye, I ken ye were always varry ceevil, and we'll een tak just a wee peenck together for auld Langsyne. Thank ye, lod, thank ye, I'm varry much obleeged. Good health."

As the Purser said thus he raised the palm of his hand upon which he had shook out of the box something less than a full ounce of the rael Scotch, and ap-

"Do you wish me to be candid, sir.?"

"I do; yo know, Reuben, I always give praise where I find openness, and I trust in this instance there will be no deviation from that candour of character which in you I have on many former occasions had cause to admire."

"The fact is this, sir, when you sent for Mr. Strachan and myself upon deck, I expected nothing less than that I should be mastheaded. Now, although I would not attempt to avoid that punishment when out at sea, I certainly would practise a little deception to do so in harbour. It would be such a *trial* to my pride, Mr. Rouseabout to be stuck up there for three or four hours, an object of ridicule to every passing boat, and to all the other ships in the harbour. I could not have borne it, sir, indeed I could not, so I feigned a lame arm, knowing that would enable me to escape the dreaded disgrace."

"And your eye, youngster, is that all *sham* too, as you term it?"

"No, sir, that is not all '*my eye*,' it is really very black and blood shot,—look, Mr. Rouseabout, I can assure you, sir, I feel very much ashamed to show it."

"I see, I see; you cannot go on shore for Mr. Oliver now, Reuben—I would not have Colonel Nesbit see one of the Sea Nymph's young gentlemen with an eye like that on any account."

"Oh, sir, do let me go, I can wear a black patch over it, and then the shore-going folks will think I have lost an eye in the engagement with the *Brillante*, I should be quite a *Lion amongst the Lobsters*.* Do let me go, Mr. Rouseabout, I promise you I will attend better to my orders than I did at St. Vincent's."

"Your notoriety for mischief and devilry is gone

* A term applied by sailors to the military.

before you, young gentleman, Captain Dalrymple has informed me that the garrison were very much surprised that Mr. M'Grudgem did not accept their invitation to dine with the mess yesterday along with the officers of the frigate, but when he told them the story of the snuff-box, and the manner in which the lean Scotchman threw his masticators overboard, he thought the whole house would have fallen with their obstreperous laughter.—Poor Grudgem, why he will positively get leaner than ever, now that he has no teeth to munch his mutton with."

"Then I am not to go on shore in charge of the cutter, sir?"

"No, Reckless, I cannot let you go this time. Besides I should probably be hearing of you skylarking again with a pack of young ladies and dancing dogs, making the latter Captains, the girls ships and ladies guinea pigs, and yourself, forsooth, an Admiral before you have served your time as midshipman.—No, no, such goings on will not do a second time, therefore jump below and tell your messmate, Mr. Boyson, to prepare himself to go away in the boat. Say that I await him in my cabin, where I will give him directions about landing."

In consequence of some delay, the sun had reached his zenith full two hours and was slowly descending towards the Western horizon before the summons of, "*Away there first cutters, away,*" was heard to reverberate along the Sea Nymph's decks.

"Now, Mr. Boyson, are you all ready there in the cutter?" asked the first lieutenant, who stood looking on by the gangway.

"All ready, sir."

"Shove off, young gentleman."

"Shove off, it is, sir," sung out Old Grant the coxswain, as soon as the bowman had taken his seat and raised his oar. "Let fall of all, — Give way, lads."

Immediately after the splash of the falling oars into the water, the cutter soon began to leave the frigate astern, and Mr. Rouseabout once more turned his attention to his duties on board, muttering to himself as he did so, "There goes as smart a boat's crew, and as fine an old fellow for a cox-en as ever belonged to His Majesty's service."

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRIVATEER.

But passion most dissembles, yet betrays
 Even by its darkness — as the blackest sky
 Foretells the heaviest tempest, it displays
 Its workings through the vainly guarded eye,
 And in whatever aspect it arrays
 Itself, 'tis still the same hypocrisy. —

She walks the waters like a thing of life,
 And seems to dare the elements to strife,
 Who would not brave the battle-fire, — the wreck
 To move the monarch of her peopled deck? —

BYRON.

THE western shore of the beautiful and salubrious little island of Tortola, off which the *Sea Nymph* lay at anchor, has many projecting promontories running out into the sea to a very considerable distance, and is also indented with several romantic bays and creeks, some of

which are so obscurely hidden by the immense cliffs around, that small vessels can put into them and ride safely at their anchors in the most perfect concealment.

In the centre of the coffee plantation on the same coast, about three miles from the capital town of the colony, stood the villa of Colonel Nesbit. The site of the Colonel's residence was most delightfully elevated, commanding a view on the south, of the basin or harbour for shipping ; on the west, several wild and zigzag paths were to be traced, skirting the mountain sides of a high cliff, whose base rested upon the shingle and hard sandy beach beneath ; on the north, the eye might range with unobstructed gaze over the wide expanse of the dark blue Atlantic ocean ; and on the east, the scenery was magnificently picturesque, comprising the plains and a succession of precipitous and rugged mountains which extended from one end of the island to the other.

It was towards the close of a quiet sunny day, about a month previous to the frigate's arrival at Tortola, that a light skiff, containing three individuals, was sculled with silent and speedy motion along one of the narrow creeks just alluded to, which as it extended inland, formed the extreme boundary to Colonel Nesbit's grounds. The two men who sat upon the thwarts of the boat were ordinary looking beings in coarse red flannel shirts and caps, of very athletic frames, and with dauntless and hardy countenances, that bespoke them to be well inured to the toil and harass of a venturesome livelihood. But the other, by whose skilful hand alone the boat was at present being steered on her course, appeared to belong to quite a different class of men, there being nothing whatever in his *tout-ensemble* to signify

There was a pistol bullet and a small slip of paper, upon which was written in pencil the word '*silence*,' tied up in the handkerchief, but from whence it came they could not make out, all they knew was that it came downwards, and that it must have been thrown at them with a considerable degree of force. However, they obeyed the silent mandate it contained.

The music which had attracted the notice of the two men in the boat, proceeded from an ancient building or kind of temple, of gothic architecture, which stood upon the cliff above them in a very retired part of Colonel Nesbit's garden, and at a considerable distance from the house. From the size of the trees forming the grove, which completely hid the edifice from view until close upon it, and from the decayed state of its external walls, it might have withstood the ravages of time for more than a century. The interior, however, was in a much better state of repair, and consisted of two apartments. The larger of the two was rather spacious, and seemed to be in regular use as a chapel for religious purposes, while the smaller or inner chamber answered the purpose of a vestry. The first and most prominent object that attracted the eye on entering the building, was a splendid mausoleum of white marble erected in the nave, upon which was placed a classical urn, so elegantly formed and so chastely sculptured, that it was evidently the work of a master in the art. A highly polished black slab, on that side the tomb facing the entrance door, upon which was engraven in gilt letters the following humble inscription, at once told whose remains they were that rested within the peaceful vault beneath—

Sacred
To the Memory of
A M O Y
The beloved Wife, and
ALFRED
The only Son, of
E D G A R N E S B I T.
Died A.D. * * *

In cœlo quies.

It was the Sabbath evening. The widower, attended by his daughter and only surviving offspring and household, had assembled together within the temple for the performance of divine worship. Without, all nature seemed to repose in calm tranquillity. The foliage of the surrounding trees was unruffled by the slightest zephyr, and the windows in the domed ceiling of the building being thrown open, the clear and sweet-flowing strains of sacred melody ascended towards their heavenly destination in solemn and unbroken chords. The service being concluded, all the congregation departed, save one fair loiterer, who remained kneeling upon the pedestal of the tomb just mentioned, in the attitude of silent and devout prayer. The young devotee appeared to be in her springtime of life, and so finely formed was her profile that she might have been said to personify youth, beauty, and innocence, mourning at the sepulchre of departed worth. Her beautifully moulded figure was shewn to advantage by a laced bodice of black satin, closely fitting the shape. Her rich auburn hair was drawn back and arrayed in tresses falling around the head, over which was thrown a white mantilla, so disposed as occasionally to fall down the back to the feet of the wearer, but at present it was gathered in folds

and hung gracefully on her left arm. The complexion of the young lady was fair and perfectly free from that olive tinge which Europeans generally acquire by an exposure to the heat of a tropical sun, and the expression of her countenance, which was serene and angel-like, bespoke her possessed of deep passion and sweetness of disposition. The slight dash of melancholy, which as she knelt beamed from her large mellow eye, tended to render the general character of her features even the more interesting.

The surrounding trees cast a shade about the place even while the sun was high up in the heavens, but when their shadows became deepened by the approaching twilight, they seemed to frown fearfully upon the fair occupant of the sanctuary, and a mysterious gloom gathered about her as the day receded. Still the imagination of the young mourner was so completely absorbed in its wanderings while holding communion with the spirits of the two regretted beings by whose grave she knelt, that she heeded not the approach of night's more sombre hue, until startled from her reverie by the sound of a footstep proceeding from the inner apartment or vestry before mentioned, which apprised her that she was not alone in the temple. She looked up and observed by the aid of a small glimmer of light that obtruded through an arched gothic window situated in the side wall of the building, the shadow of a man's figure who stood concealed behind the monument. At the first impulse of alarm the maiden rose upon her feet and was about to flee from the spot, when the stranger whom we have already introduced advanced from his obscure position and gently intercepted her passage out, at the same time addressing her in language the most bland

and persuasive. The tone of his voice seemed instantly to rivet her attention, she looked in the speaker's face and at once recognized him.

"Pardon me, Miss Nesbit, for this unseasonable intrusion upon you while engaged in your devotions," said the stranger, mildly; "it was not my intention to have disturbed you until you had finished."

The intruder was a particularly handsome man, about six or seven years the young lady's senior. His figure was well proportioned, his countenance open and intelligent, and his deportment towards the fair being whom he had surprised was gentlemanly and graceful. He was attired in a plain suit of black, and with the exception of a small dark moustache which adorned his upper lip, there was nothing in his external appearance to denote that his was otherwise than a peaceful calling. But his large, bold, and soul-speaking eye told another and a different tale. Its fierce and searching glance betrayed the inward man. In it might be read the lawless and uncontrolled passions of the heart, revelling amidst the ruins of its earlier virtues. Ambition, avarice, hatred, and jealousy were lurking beneath his smile, that smile too which wore the resemblance of a pure and disinterested love.

"Captain Bremmil!" exclaimed the fair being who confronted the stranger, in a trembling voice, and with a good deal of surprise manifested in her manner. "How came *you* here,—and what means this unwelcome intrusion upon my privacy?"

"Unwelcome, lady, sayest thou?" replied the stranger, as the same time trying with penetrating eyes to read the maiden's most inward thoughts. "Is then my presence here unwelcome to *you*, Miss Nesbit?"

"How can you expect that it should be otherwise, Captain Bremmil? Look at the inscription upon that tomb, and then you will know why your presence here is considered unwelcome by me."

The stranger cast his eye upon the tablet and read. Suddenly his lip became quivering and colourless, and his whole countenance betrayed inward emotion as he spoke.

"Your mother, Miss Nesbit, is she also dead?"

"Yes, sir, too true it is. On the same day that your hand became stained with my brother's blood, I was also deprived of a mother's love. The fatal intelligence was made known to her without caution and she fell a martyr to the shock; she died the same evening of a broken heart. But how gained you admission into this place, and what can be *your* object in secreting yourself within these sacred walls at this late hour?"

"Excuse me, lady, if I do not explicitly answer all your enquiries. It is necessary to my interests that the method by which I gained admission into this temple should be only known to myself; but for my object I must beg to refer you to the propositions which I have already transmitted to you in writing."

"Ah, the same mystery as ever still envelopes all your actions, Captain Bremmil. But to what do you allude? — I have never received any communication from you?"

"No! then my messenger must have played me false," said the stranger, quickly, and his eye became lighted with ire as the suspicion of treachery against himself flashed across his brain; then in a calmer tone he added: "Yet how is it, Miss Nesbit, that you should have complied with part of my request by granting me

an interview at this very time and place according to the appointment named therein, if you had not received notice of the same from myself?"

"Believe me, sir," hastily retorted the maiden, while the glow of indignant pride was observed to mantle on her cheek, "I was totally ignorant of meeting with you here, whom I supposed to be thousands of leagues away from our island. Besides, do you imagine that the daughter of Colonel Nesbit would condescend to hold clandestine appointments with the man who was the cause of her brother's death, and at the very tomb too where that dearly beloved brother's remains are deposited? -- Oh, Captain Bremmil, I thought you had known me better!"

"Miss Nesbit, I as much regret your brother's early doom as you do. Yet it is uncharitable of you to censure me so very severely on that head, for it was a just quarrel and he had fair play shown him by me I assure you."

"Fair play!" repeated the young lady, in a tone of deep distress, while her beautiful eyes melted with tears at the recollection of her brother's fondness towards her. "Oh, sir, speak not so lightly in my hearing of that fatal affair, for it has not only turned the hearts of honourable men against you, but it has also caused one who once regarded you with a sisterly affection to look upon you now as a—" she hesitated in her speech.

"Brother's murderer," interrupted the other, at the same time fixing his searching gaze upon her countenance, he asked, "And did you, Miss Nesbit, never regard me with any warmer feeling than a sister's love previous to the taking place of that fatal duel between your brother Alfred and myself?"

"No, indeed I did not, Captain Bremmil, and I trust you have never been deceived by any part of my demeanour towards you to imagine that I ever evinced or felt any stronger prepossession in your favour than what I have already acknowledged. But let me pass, sir, I beseech you ; it is not maidenly of me to be holding converse with you alone in this place, therefore I insist that you will not detain me longer."

"Permit me, lady, to ask one more question before you depart from hence."

"Be speedy in doing so then, sir, for it grows late, and the Colonel will be sending some one to seek me."

In a hoarse kind of voice which had become tremulous with anxious doubts, the stranger addressed the young lady—"Have I not a rival who has supplanted me in Miss Nesbit's affections, and is he not at the present time a sojourner within the walls of her father's mansion and esteemed by him as the welcome and favoured suitor for his daughter's hand?"

"No rival of yours, Captain Bremmil, I can assure you, for I was acquainted with him to whom you allude long before you were introduced to our family."

"It was not in this country then, I presume, that you first met with him?"

"No: it was while receiving my education in England. I was placed under the protection of his father, to whom my deceased mother was distantly related."

"And you love him, lady?"

"Our troth was plighted in the early days of our childhood."

"Oh, how has my vanity deceived me—how have I been blinded by my passion!" exclaimed the stranger,

choking as he uttered the words, with the wild and tumultuous emotions which arose in his bosom as this unexpected disclosure was made known to him. A cloud of sorrow and the bitter poignancy of remorse all of a sudden passed across his troubled features, as he seized within his iron grasp the trembling and soft round hand of the maiden and dropped on his knee before her. In the most earnest and pathetic language he besought of her not to leave him until he had made her acquainted with the depth and purity of the love which he himself professed to have encouraged in his own bosom for her. He vowed by heaven that he would barter his soul to ensure her bliss, and that the remainder of his life should be devoted to her, and to her only, if she would but unsay what she had told him.

“Bright star of my destiny!” exclaimed he, encircling his arm around the young lady’s waist, seemingly in despair and almost deprived of reason by the excited state of his feelings; while she, more and more amazed at the stranger’s vehemence in expressing them, as though she were in a trance of bewilderment, listened to him in silent wonder. “Bright star of my destiny, easier would it be for me to follow the wild and high soaring eagle in his flight than to blot out your image from my mind; the impression it has made is indelible, it is deep-rooted, and time will tell that it is lasting. My affection for thee, sweet angel, is unchangeable, and so will it continue to be until this heart hath ceased to beat and this tongue to speak. Regard me then in the light you have acknowledged you once did, and cast me not, I most earnestly entreat that you will not cast me from you as your brother’s murderer. Oh, Alfred! Alfred! I call upon thee to bear witness to the sincerity of my protes-

tations of constancy and love, listen thou to my avowal, and if it be so permitted for thy spirit—”

At this moment the entrance into the temple was darkened by a figure who stood within the porch, for a short while a silent observer of the scene before him.

“Amoy,” breathed forth the latter in a low and unearthly tone of voice.

The lovely girl, as though awaking at the sound thereof from the spell which bound her involuntarily within the stranger’s embrace, cast her eyes in the direction from whence the voice came, and starting with surprise, sprung from his hold as though she were avoiding the polluted grasp of a demon. The time, the place, and the attitude in which she was discovered, spoke volumes to condemn the poor distressed girl in the eyes of him who remained motionless as a statue where he was first beheld by the surprised parties. But *his* affection for the angelic being whom he sought, was that kind of love that soared far above suspicion ; he could not in his heart doubt her truth to himself, although he had ocular demonstration sufficient to cause doubts to spring up in his breast which at another time he would have dashed therefrom with a scornful disgust at his own foolish and unjust fears. The stranger whose wandering senses were suddenly recalled by the young lady’s perceptible embarrassment, arose up from his humble posture, and facing round, at once confronted the new comer. For a few seconds the two minutely surveyed each other’s persons. The latter with a look of surprise and astonishment, the former with a brow overclouded with vindictive hatred and direful jealousy.

“It is Lieutenant Oliver of his Britannic Majesty’s ship the *Sea Nymph*, I presume, whom I have the honour to address,” said the stranger, courteously.

"The same," answered the naval officer; "but you have the advantage of me, sir. Who may you be, I would wish to know that dares forcibly to detain a young lady against her will, at such a time and in such a place as this?"

"Dares!" replied the other in a sarcastic tone of defiance; then added in a lower key, as he retired towards the door which led into the vestry or inner apartment of the temple—"Dares! did he say. But let it pass; it is as well he knows me not. Miss Nesbit, we shall meet again; till then adieu."

After saying thus and then looking daggers at the young lieutenant, the stranger entered the vestry and closed the door after him.

"Amoy," said Lieutenant Oliver, addressing the young lady by her christiain name, in an unusual cold tone of voice, "what means this?—how am I to interpret the extraordinary scene I have just witnessed? Explain it, I implore of you to explain its meaning, and let me not suffer the dreadful suspense I now feel any longer."

"Oh, Frank, ask me not to tell you here," answered the maiden, in great agitation, as she confidently passed her arm within that of her lover. "Let us hasten to the house, dearest Frank, for I feel faint with the excitement I have just gone through, and seriously indisposed."

"What, are you ill, love?" asked the officer, tenderly gazing in Miss Nesbit's face and expressing the deepest concern in his manner. "And has the villain dared to insult?—But, stay one minute—he cannot escape my vengeance—there is no outlet from the vestry I believe—I will seek him there. Be not alarmed, dearest Amoy he surely is not the dastard to take advantage of a cripple, as I am."

"Oh, Frank, let me entreat of you not to venture a quarrel with a man of such violent passions as the one you have just seen."

Although the entreaty was spoken by the young lady in a most winning and affectionate manner, still it was lost upon him to whom she fondly clung. Before she had finished the sentence, he advanced to the vestry door, and having burst it open with his unwounded foot, entered, but he found himself alone in the place. He examined every part of the walls and floor with the most scrutinizing eye, still he could not find the outlet by which the stranger had escaped. Yet gone he was to a certainty, and the young lady and himself left the temple without dissolving the mystery.

As the two returned, beneath the shady alcove which led them through a secluded part of the gardens from the temple to the villa, Lieutenant Oliver, seemingly in deep thought and perplexity of mind, at length broke silence and said—

"I have most certainly seen that man's features before, Amoy, but where I cannot for the life of me just now call to mind."

"He seemed to be perfectly acquainted with your person, Frank, for he recognised you by name the instant he cast his eyes upon you," answered Miss Nesbit, as she affectionately leaned upon her lover's arm.

"The impression I have is that he appeared in a very different character the last time I met him from that which he has assumed this evening, and I have a strange foreboding of evil concerning him."

"Perhaps you may have met him at sea, Frank, dear. Captain Bremmil has been a seafaring man, at least we have been informed that he once held a command in the *Spanish navy*."

"*Has been*—did you say, Amoy, and in the Spanish navy too? Pray how long has he been known to your family?"

"It is now about eighteen months since we first met him. It was at a ball given by the governor at his own house. Afterwards Bremmil and my poor brother Alfred became very friendly, and he frequently visited us at the villa. Sometimes he would remain a week, sometimes a month, then he would be away for a similar length of time, and we never saw or heard any thing of him. There was always much mystery about Capt. B. which neither the Colonel nor myself liked, and we could not define his movements. Still he was a great favorite with all of us, for he was so very affable and kind in his manner to those about him."

"Tis strange.—Do you know the origin of the quarrel between Alfred and him?"

"I believe it was in consequence of some dispute that took place at the billiard table. They frequently used to join in that game with the officers of the garrison, and Captain Bremmil did not act so honourably as he should have done in some match that was played. Poor Alfred told him of his fault, and the fatal duel was the consequence. After that circumstance Captain Bremmil left the island, and we have never seen or heard anything concerning him until this evening, when I was surprised by his sudden appearance in the temple a short time before you came to seek me."

"Let me see—eighteen months ago—we were at peace with Spain just then," soliloquised the lieutenant, recalling over in his mind the events of that period—then, as if suddenly remembering one particular circumstance, he exclaimed—"Ah! I have it now. I recollect

a month or two previous to the time you have named we fell in with a Spanish privateer schooner while cruising off the Bahama Islands, and she was under the command of the man I have just seen. It came on to blow hard, and we were driven from our moorings, and very probably should have been wrecked upon a lee shore if it had not been for the timely aid which this same Captain—I forget his name, but it was not Bremmil I am persuaded, rendered to us.”

“In what manner did he assist you, Frank?”

“By piloting our frigate safely through a very hazardous rocky pass, the soundings of which were totally unknown to us.”

“That was a very noble act of his certainly, Frank—did not Captain Dalrymple esteem it as such?”

“Yes, love, he did at the time, and treated the privateer very courteously. While we lay off the island taking in fresh water he was invited to dine with the officers of our frigate, and Captain Dalrymple gave him several letters of introduction to friends of his own, who were influential men in the different colonies where they resided. But since then he has learnt something relative to the character of the privateer Captain, which has caused him to repent having shown him so much courtesy.”

“Indeed, what has Captain Bremmil taken an improper advantage of your commander’s introductions?”

“He has Amoy—but that is not all.—What vexes Captain Dalrymple the most is, that he should have let a Tartar slip so easily through his fingers, as he did this same Captain Bremmil of yours.”

“A Tartar, dearest Frank—what mean you by a Tartar?”

"I mean a man who cannot, or what is most likely, *will* not understand the difference between *meum* and *tuum*, i.e. a fellow possessed of no principle whatever?"

"And was Captain Bremmil of such a despicable character as you describe?"

"I will tell you why that man so ably assisted our vessel in her danger. You must understand that he had for a long time scoured the seas around in a most piratical and unlawful manner, and had committed very serious depredations upon vessels belonging to nations that were neutral in the war. Having collected together a considerable portion of ill-gotten wealth, which he had concealed upon the uninhabited island off which we had so narrow an escape of being cast away, and probably fearing that if a numerous and well disciplined ship's company like ours were to be wrecked upon its shores, they might find out his treasures, and claim a share, if not the whole; he thought it advisable for his own interest to get us safely off the rocks with a sound bottom, that we might proceed on our passage and leave the hidden booty free from molestation. His schooner sailed in company with us as soon as we had laid in our water, away from the island, and we parted a few days afterwards. No doubt he made the island again, while we continued on our cruise. So by what I have stated you will observe what the privateer's motive was for appearing to act such a noble part towards the preservation of our frigate."

"How did you become acquainted with this, Frank?"

"Captain Dalrymple, my dear, received some private intelligence concerning the man from a correspondent of his at Cuba."

"Really how one may be deceived by external appear-

ances. Why the Colonel had the highest opinion of Captain Bremmil previous to the duel, and so had I. Yet I must say that we never liked the mystery that enveloped some of his actions."

"He is a villain, and deeply dyed,—you may depend upon that, Amoy."

"Let us not judge too harshly, Frank dear; your Captain may have been misinformed you know."

"Captain Dalrymple is not the man to give credence to calumny against any one, Amoy. And I am sure he would not have listened to any thing prejudicial to the privateer's character, if he had not just reasons for believing what has been communicated to him."

"Oh Frank, how very fatal has been the introduction of this man to our family! Poor Alfred, how kind was he ever to me and my poor dear mother too,—both gone! Oh Frank dearest! you must excuse my weakness, but I cannot think of them and repeat their names without feeling acutely the loss I have sustained."

As the distressed young lady said this she burst into tears and ascended to her chamber, they having by this time arrived at the villa.

Day succeeded night and night succeeded day without anything of interest to our tale occurring at Tortola, until the arrival of the *Sea Nymph* frigate in harbour. A few days previous to which a small two-masted vessel had been observed standing off and on the island, but always keeping so far out at sea, that it was impossible for the inhabitants of the town to make out either her object or character. Sometime under the shade of evening, however, the suspicious looking craft had stolen into one of the little obscure bays with which we have before noticed the western coast of Tortola abounded.

There lay the rakish vessel rising and falling upon the swells of the tide with a swan-like motion, silent and at anchor. It was noon and the sun was reflected from his high tropical altitude in the bosom of the dazzling waters, whose surface was undimpled with the slightest breath. Every spar and every shroud might be traced upon the polished waves as they rolled on their sleepy course towards the base of the cliff, with the accuracy of reality. She was schooner rigged, and her tall and beautifully tapered masts, which might have belonged to a much larger vessel, for they were of strength sufficient to lift the craft entirely out of the water, raked aft as though they fain would fall, and the mould of her hull was of such unexceptionable symmetry in its proportions that she seemed to vie with nature's self. The schooner's sails were not furled, they were merely clued up and hung in loose festoons from the yards, and her cable was hove quite short, so that she might be got under weigh and take her departure from her mooring ground at the shortest notice. No ensign was shown to tell to what country the vessel belonged, and, with the exception of a gilt figure head representing a savage looking hound *rampant*, she was painted all black. There she lay dangerous and death-like to look upon, yet beautiful even in her gloomy mystery. Eight brass carronades peered from the port holes on her either side, and two others of heavier calibre, mounted upon revolving carriages as bow and stern chasers, were to be seen in the most perfect state for immediate and efficient service.

Upon the forecastle, around one of these frowning emblems of war, were a group of men reclining under a canvass awning spread from side to side of the vessel, in various, easy, and indolent postures. They were dressed

nearly alike, in blue checked cotton or canvass trowsers, bound round their waists by red and blue sashes, red worsted caps and flannel shirts rolled up to the elbow so as to expose the shape of their muscular and freckled arms, and without either shoes or stockings. Some were enjoying a nap after their rude midday meal, while others were lying stretched out at length upon their backs, on the deck, and amusing their visionary organs by idly watching the little blue clouds of smoke which escaped from their mouths, as they puffed away at the cigars which each had stuck therein. Most of these, by their swarthy complexions, dark hair, and the peculiar character of their features, were easily recognized as Spaniards and Portuguese. Leaning against the bulwark, apart from the rest, with their arms folded upon their brawny chests, were two other men, whose language and open countenances pronounced them to be English. The latter were eyeing with apparent contempt the indolence of their shipmates.

"I say old Dryskin," commenced one of the English sailors, addressing one of his countryman, "did you ever see such a set of lazy lubbers as these Spanish and Portuguese coves are? Why they have no sooner filled their craws but they turn to a corking just like so many Cape Boobies?"

"I dont like the garlic smelling rogues at all, Ned, at least not for shipmates, sugar my tart if I do. They are too idle to work, and there's no good in them." Answered the other.

"I differ with your last remark, Mike, for you know there be two kinds of good. There's *good* and *good for nothing*."

"Well then these fellows belong to the latter breed

in my opinion. They are made up of treachery and revenge. If you anger them they will thirst after your blood like tigers."

"That's true enough, Mike, but you know we always carry about us the wherewith to defend ourselves." Said the first speaker as he clasped the handle of a hugh knife which was stuck within the folds of his belt.

"What use would that be supposing you were asleep; why they would cut your throat in a jiffey and you wouldn't know nothing about it until it was over, sugar my tart if you would. Now that's not a very pleasant thing to think of."

"No, it is not, Mike, but what are we to do, we are here shipped on board this craft to serve for so long, and how are we to help ourselves?"

"Why let us cut and run, Ned. There's a frigate in the harbour off the town, and she will be glad of two able hands like you and me. So let us turn honest men and offer ourselves to her Captain."

"I'll tell you what, old Dryskin, I rather think that would be a bit of a case."

"A case of what, Ned?"

"Why a case of jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire. Don't you know what frigate that is in the harbour, Mike?"

"No: what's her name?"

"It's the saucy Sea Nymph. I knew her by the cut of her topsels; she has three new cloths in her mizen. Don't you remember when we last clapt eyes on that bit of canvass, Mike, what happened?"

"Sure I do, Ned; but her captain has forgot that before now, depend upon it."

"Well, perhaps he may; but if he has not, you know,

he could give us a free passage to his fore-yard arm. But what plans have you thought of to get away from our present engagement?"

"The skipper goes ashore this evening and we are to go with him as before. Now suppose, Ned, we give him the slip while he is cruising after that female-she cratur as he goes to see."

"It won't do, Mike. Humph!—" said the man, in a low voice as he pulled his countryman away by the arm. "We are overheard—do you not see a pair of gleaming eyes peeping at us from behind the caboose?"

"It is the Mate, Ned, and you may depend on't he's been listening to us. Sugar my tart, but we shall be getting our necks into a noose aboard this craft if we do not mind. Let us go below, Ned. See the snake in the grass is crawling aft; he'll go and tell the skipper all he has heard. My neck itches, Ned; how's yours feel?"

"I'll tell you when we get below, Mike—come along."

After saying thus, the two men descended below accordingly. While the party who had been acting the part of eavesdropper, also disappeared off deck down the after hatch as they descended by the one upon the forecastle.

The greatest order and regularity prevailed throughout the stranger's vessel, and her cabin was furnished in a most costly and luxurious manner. Everything was there to please the eye and to add zest to repose. Even there were to be observed warlike preparations both for defence against a more powerful enemy or for attack upon a weaker victim. Cutlasses, muskets, rifles, tomahawks, boarding-pikes, and pistols, were arranged upon the lower deck with such taste, that the deadly properties of each might almost have been forgot while viewing

them in their then beautifully bright and inoffensive state. On the side opposite the companion-way a door opened into a state room situated farther astern, which was fitted up in a superior and gorgeous style, to which the wealth of many nations had contributed. Upon a rich crimson velvet couch, which ornamented one side of the cabin, reclined the figure of a man, asleep. It was the stranger whom we introduced at the commencement of our present chapter.

Nearly four hours from noon had fled and still there he slept, though from the restless movement of his limbs occasionally, it appeared that the spirit within him was ill at ease; suddenly he sprung up from his reclining posture and staring wildly around, as though he were endeavouring to collect his wandering thoughts, he stamped his foot upon the rich thick Turkey carpet with which the whole of the cabin floor was covered, but its yielding surface betrayed neither footstep or sound. He was about to summons his attendant by the deep tone of his voice, when the state room door was opened and his mate stood before him.

"Ah! Lotesquez, is that you—bear you tidings for me from—ah! what have we here?" said the skipper, as he scanned his eye quickly over the letter which his subaltern had presented to him on entering.

"It was brought on board the schooner about an hour ago, sir," answered the mate, in a respectful manner; "but as I had no instructions to deliver it immediately, I did not disturb your sleep."

"What's the hour, Lotesquez?"

"It wants full two hours of sunset."

"Order my skiff to be lowered, I will be ready without delay. Tell Roberts and Mill

pany me. That is all, I have no further orders, Lotesquez, you need not wait."

"Your commands shall be attended to, sir," said the mate, as he made a low bow to his superior and retired from the state room.

It was nearly about the same time when young Boyson left the frigate in one of her cutters, that a small skiff containing the same three individuals as before, was shoved from alongside the privateer schooner and advanced once more towards the mouth of the narrow creek, which we have mentioned, formed the extreme boundary to Colonel Nesbit's grounds.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHASE.

LIEUTENANT ROUSEABOUT had not left the deck. He was gazing out upon the town, upon the lovely sky, upon the whole scene which lay before his eyes, thinking it was probable of something far away, of home perhaps, when a boat manned by a black and in which were two sailors came alongside.

They informed the boatswain that they had important information to give and were at once admitted on deck.

"Why you rascals, where have I seen you before?" said the Lieutenant sternly eyeing our two friends Ned and Mike.

"I'm sure I don't know sir," said Ned demurely "but

if your honour plazes, we've got a bit of a yarn to tell as presses.

"What is it!" answered the Lieutenant still sternly.

"Why sir, this here! the affair we've been napped on board a private cove, as played the regular dodigo. We only just found out as he was a bloody pirate, so we've cut away me and Mike, and hope if your honour takes the vessel, as you'll put us on the ship's books, and axe no questions."

"So you hang dog looking thieves you have run away from a pirate have you? I've a great mind to string you up at the yard arm. Well! we shall see. If we take the vessel, I dare say Captain Dalrymple will let you off with a round dozen each."

The men looked each really much relieved as if they had expected much worse.

"Now where is this craft?"

Mike explained as well as he could.

"Whew!" said the Lieutenant, "near the creek which runs up Colonel Nesbit's grounds, and the captain has gone ashore to look after some girl. This must be looked to. Mr. Reckless see these men safely stowed."

And the Lieutenant hurried below to confer with the captain. They both had heard of the suspicious stranger that had been noticed lurking about the island, the information was more easily believed, as a notorious pirate had for some time been known to infest the neighbourhood of Tortola. There was no time to be lost; the escape of the two sailors, who had swam ashore, might not be discovered for an hour or so but it would in time when the schooner would probably sheer off.

A brief conference was held, after which it was de-

terminated to give chase at once. The frigate was to gain an offing, while a number of boats pull'd in shore, the day being fine and the sea calm, so that in case the shooner escaped the boats, she might not the frigate.

The Lieutenant was on deck again in a few minutes giving rapid orders,—orders which were obeyed with the more alacrity as Mike and Ned had already whispered something of the service upon which they were about to start. The boats were got out with great rapidity, Master Reckless whose black eye was no obstacle to the present service, was allowed to go, which was matter of great satisfaction of course to that dare devil young gentleman, who was never happy or contented unless he were engaged in either a battle royal, or some of those sky larking efforts which we have already alluded to.

Boyson, whose gallantry during the engagement with the Brillante had raised him almost to the position of a man, went in the same boat. The barge, launch, and jolly boat, as well as the cutters were all well manned and officered by their proper officers. Lieutenant Rouseabout himself commanded the expedition.

The sun was warm, the wind was gentle, and yet the topsails filled to the breeze, when to the great astonishment of the inhabitants of the town, the Sea Nymph got under weigh and stood seaward. Their surprise was not a little increased when the boats were observed putting away in the direction of the privateer. A bustle might at this instant have been remarked in a small grog shop at the corner of the town, and in a few minutes a horseman might have been seen galloping away at the top of his speed in the same direction towards which the boats headed.

"Pull away my hearties," said Rouseabout, who was more than usually excited, and then addressing Mr. Sailwell the gruff old master. "That man riding away there looks suspicious. Keep steadily behind the jolly boat, recollect these back channels are very narrow, at all events those runaway rascals say so."

"It's a blind kind of sailing any way, steering by the stern of a boat," replied Mr. Sailwell who always liked a clear berth and plenty of sea room.

"What's the jolly boat stopping for?" said Rouseabout almost rising from his seat.

"Some sky larking of that young Reckless," replied Mr. Sailwell solemnly, "for I see him pointing a gun."

Now Lieutenant Rouseabout well knew that in his presence and in command of a boat the young gentleman would not act without some very good cause. He saw him take aim at something on shore, but what that something was he could not see, as the rock intervened. He bade his men then pull up to the jolly boat and see what was the matter. At that instant Reuben Reckless fired, and the echoes had scarcely died away, when the Lieutenant came in sight of a man who, just rising from the ground, was standing over the body of a horse, which lay sprawling in the agonies of death upon the ground. The man, who had followed a circuitous track, and then come down to the sea path, without any attempt to complain of his loss, ran back and disappeared. The jolly boat once more pulled a-head, and the rest followed, the Lieutenant very much relieved, and Mr. Sailwell wondering when the impertinency of young gentlemen would end.

The men, in consequence of the extreme heat of the day, which was considerably encreased by the want of

wind, were not able to pull so rapidly as could have been wished, while the windings and turnings of the inner channels were so intricate that it was at least two hours before they came in sight of the privateer. There she lay floating like a duck on the water, silent and motionless, a thing of beauty and grace, her long low hull making her look smaller than she really was, while her elegant and tapering spars, her tall masts, her projecting booms, her figure head and capstan head shone in the bright sun and wrapped her in a hazy light. Not a soul was on deck. Even the watchman had gone below to escape the intense heat.

Profound silence now characterised the expedition. The boats were under a cliff about three hundred yards distant, and began pulling steadily for the brigantine, just as a small skiff manned by one single individual struck out from the shore with hot and furious haste. This was at once discovered by the officers, who affected however not to notice it. On they went, the oars falling steadily in the water, and no sound heard, but the working of the rutlocks, and the hard breathing of the men. Suddenly a cry, a shrill and piercing cry from the skiff, made all start.

"Pull away, my hearties, pull away," said Rouseabout.

"Pull away, heave away, my Spankers," said Reuben Reckless, clutching his sword and pistol.

In another instant the jolly boat was along side, and the Middy and his spankers as they were called, were climbing on deck, just as a cloud of men armed and unarmed, came rushing up from the forecastle of the Brigantine. A volley from the boarders, a volley from the boats, and then a rush of new assailants drove them in

confusion back ; and half-armed, surprised, without a leader, exaggerating the numbers of their enemies, they surrendered at discretion without a struggle.

Reuben Reckless was enraptured. He was the first who leaped on deck, and he received the thanks of the Lieutenant publicly. Having looked his pride and gratitude, he advanced closer to the officer, touched his cap, and said he wished to ask a favour.

"What is it?" said Rouseabout with a good natured smile.

"If you please sir, the Skipper is ashore, and the men who guide us say, up to no good. If you will allow me the jolly boat crew, I will go ashore and join Lieutenant Oliver. If I miss the Skipper, he will come and bring himself here."

"You may go," said the Lieutenant smiling and turning away.

Reckless did not require twice telling, but sprang nimbly into his boat, called together his men and pulled away for the shore. The skiff had disappeared, but Reuben cared not for this, he pulled away towards an opening in the rocks and trees, entered the creek, formerly alluded to and halted only when he saw a boat, completely abandoned, fastened to the shore by its painter. At this instant they heard a wild shriek, which made Reuben's heart beat for it was the shriek of a woman.

"Follow me my hearties," he cried springing ashore and darting up the intricate foot path.

The temple already described had been for some time almost abandoned by Amoy, after the intrusion of Captain Bremmil or rather to call him by a name more familiar to the reader, Captain Peroni ; at all events she

had visited it only when in company with her father and her lover, whose rapid convalescence seemed to tell of speedy departure. But even this sorrow was made less by the reflection that he would soon return, and that at a very early period he would make her his wife.

A letter at length came from the frigate calling on Lieutenant Oliver to return to his post unless his health were in such a state as to disqualify him from making the next cruise with them. The young officer was too conscientious not to reply that he was quite ready to join his ship.

The day had come. That evening young Oliver was to depart. The boat had indeed come for him. Amoy unable to restrain her emotions went to her room to wipe away her tears. Already in this terrible war which she could not understand, except in as far as it took her lover away, he had been seriously wounded, and how easily it was for a bullet or cutlass to take his life as it had taken the lives of thousands and thousands of others. Bitterly, bitterly did the poor girl weep as these ideas came over her, and at last unable to controul her agony of thought, and wishing to seek comfort near the remains of the departed, she rushed from her room and descending into the garden made for the temple.

In a few minutes she knelt once more by the tomb of that mother and that brother she had loved so well, and whose memory was present to her every hour of her existence, and there in passionate accents, and with bitter tears, she cried aloud to God, to protect the loved one. She remained in this position some time, sobbing, praying, and weeping, when again the same mysterious sound was heard in the inner room, a footstep trod on *the stone floor*, and the Captain appeared.

"What seek you here?" said the tearful girl rising proudly. "Begone, before I call assistance."

"Amoy! Amoy! do not speak thus," replied the other in a tone so gentle and so sad that she could not but look at him with surprise. "This is the last time I shall ask, I shall implore your love. I have already told you that you are the bright star of my destiny—if you will but listen to me, I will be all you could ask. I have had faults, I have them still, but if you will retract your refusal, if you will listen to me, I will open my heart, and reveal all that is within, and then be all you could wish. I have a little one, oh! how she would love you, and you her. Amoy! Amoy! for my sake! for your own, do not reject me."

"I must and will, my heart and hand are another's."

"Hush! hush!" said the other upon whom a whirlwind of passion was bursting.

"And then you are my brother's murderer—his assassin, and men whisper you are a pirate Captain Bremmil?"

"Amoy! Amoy! beware!" cried the other seizing her arm in his hand.

"Unhand me, unmannerly ruffian," exclaimed the indignant and alarmed girl, forgetting danger in her indignation.

"I will not unhand you lady, until you have heard me. I am a pirate, it is true, but I am weary of my life, I have riches, plenty, and I am little known. Be mine and I swear to leave the sea, to buy a plantation near your father, to become a steady and quiet planter, all that you could wish or ask. Do not risk my ruin and your own for this beardless boy, I say Amoy, will you listen to me!"

"I will not. For the last time Captain Bremmil I say, I cannot and I will not hear you. I—become the wife of him who slew my brother? why the veriest slave that ever lived, the most wretched savage, would not mate on such terms."

"Then if you will not fairly, you must be made. Come! resistance is useless—Amoy I tell you to struggle is in vain.—You must, you shall be mine."

And with these words he raised her up in his vigorous arms, and despite two or three shrill and low shrieks and much struggling, carried her into the next room and through an open door, the secret of which he must have discovered in some strange way, for none on the plantation knew it. Having once got her outside, he began utterly regardless of her shrieks to hasten down the declivity as rapidly as possible.

But who is this comes bounding after him sword in hand?

"Villain stop! harm her not and your life shall be spared," shouted Lieutenant Oliver, who pale and gaunt with his recent wound came after him as rapidly as he could.

"Ha! ha! ha!" responded the pirate with a laugh fearfully fiendish, "she is mine, she is mine. You my boys," addressing the two pirates who had now joined him, "you settle that boasting youth, who offers life so cheaply.

The men nodded their heads, drew their swords and pistols, and prepared to face the young Lieutenant, and to their great astonishment Mr. Boyson, Old Grant, and a boat's crew. They however had the advantage of a very narrow path, and prepared to defend themselves.

"A free pardon on my word," shrieked Lieutenant

Oliver who saw in a combat with these men, certain victory for the law, but the probable loss of his dear Amoy. "Down with your swords or you die."

"Who are you to promise us?" asked one of the men doubtingly.

"Lieutenant Oliver of His Majesty's ship *Sea Nymph* — out of my way, or you die."

"We trust to your word," said the men, who however were next instant disarmed and secured for safety, until the battle was over.

The pirate, who knew the road well had taken a path quite unseen, and the occasional shrieks of the girl did direct the steps of Oliver, it was simply down the slope, but by quite another path, and on the opposite side of a ravine, lower down impassable.

Captain Peroni was on the side near the sea.

Suddenly the rivals came forth into the light, on opposite sides of the said little valley.

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted the pirate who was worked up to a fearful phrenzy of excitement, "you have taken the wrong track Master Oliver and she is mine. Farewell my dainty man-of-war's man, you have seen the last of Amoy."

"No! spankers to the rescue!" shouted a shrill voice, "you have seen the last of this life."

At the same instant Reckless and his boat's crew came in sight on one hand, close to the pirate, while Old Grant and Boyson appeared beside Lieutenant Oliver on the other.

"Back! back," shouted the pirate as he laid the now senseless form of Amoy on the ground and stood over her, "move one more step and she dies."

It was too late. Old Grant who was a dead shot

had fired, and the pirate fell back with a fearful exclamation to the ground.

Reckless came up, and raised the fainting girl in his arms. At that instant he caught sight of the ~~private~~ *for* who was mortally wounded, making signs to him. He left the reviving girl and went to where the unfortunate wretch lay.

"Open my coat boy," he said in a low whisper.

The midshipman did as he was asked and saw a miniature, at which when he gazed he gave a start.

"The little girl at Jamaica," he cried aloud.

"You know her," gasped the dying man.

"I have seen her."

"Then take a packet out of my breast pocket, and swear young man to give it to her."

The word young man flattered Reckless and he complied with alacrity.

"Ah! 'tis nearly night—take care and keep your word—I'm choking—water—water—oh no—God have mercy on me—"

The blood choked him, and in a moment more he was dead.

Reckless now placed the packet, which was sealed, with the miniature in his pocket, and turned to see how matters now stood. Amoy was clasped in the arms of Lieutenant Oliver, round whom now the whole group stood.

"He's quite dead, sir," said Reuben Reckless as he saw Oliver glance towards the pirate.

"Reckless," replied the officer taking his hand, "I shall never forget what you have done. Your timely arrival saved her. Come, let us back to the house. Let the body lie where it is, the blacks can bury it."

"If I had'nt have come it would have been all the same," said the middy laughing.

"How is that?" asked Oliver, while Amoy looked at him with deep gratitude in her eyes, when once she was out of sight of the dead and senseless clay which had done her so much ill.

"Why sir we've taken the pirate's craft, about an hour ago—"

"That's good news," said Oliver, who was very pale.

"Your letter," exclaimed Amoy much alarmed at his evident weakness.

"I am a little faint. My run after the wretch has exhausted me, but 'twill be nothing. I fear however I cannot join my ship to day."

Amoy's face lightened up with a strange joy, she almost thanked the pirate for his deed.

Nay that is not right Amoy," said the young officer shaking his head. "You know I should join my ship, but I shall tell better to-morrow."

And thus they reached the house, when it was found that Oliver would require at least two or three weeks rest, before he could be of any use to the service. He wrote to this effect to Captain Dalrymple, and received an immediate leave for further three months of absence.

Great were the rejoicings in Tortola when it was known that the daring pirate was taken, and high were the commendations poured on Reckless for his conduct on that day by his commanding officer. And then all hands were summoned on board, and the *Sea Nymph* sailed in search of other enemies on those waters, where England has so long reigned supreme.

Amoy and Oliver were married as soon as the young officer was quite recovered, the pirate was buried wher

he fell, and no stone is there to mark the spot, where ended the life, of the daring, unscrupulous, and bold adventurer, whose life began in crime and ended in an ignominious death.

